BLACK MEN AND BOYS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE FUTURE OF THE BLACK FAMILY

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

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BLACK MEN AND BOYS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE FUTURE OF THE BLACK FAMILY

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2003

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:10 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Tom Davis (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Davis of Virginia and Norton.

Staff present: Peter Sirh, staff director; Melissa Wojciak, deputy staff director; Teresa Austin, chief clerk; Brien Beattie, deputy clerk; Michael Layman and Shalley Kim, legislative assistants; Phil Barnett, minority chief counsel; Kristin Amerling and Michael Yeager, minority deputy chief counsels; Tony Haywood and Rosalind Parker, minority counsels; Earley Green, minority chief clerk; Jean Gosa, minority assistant clerk; and Cecelia Morton, minority office manager.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Committee will come back to order. Today's hearing is on black men and boys in the District of Columbia and their impact on the future of the black family.

Although we have seen some remarkable progress over the past several decades, there remain significant socioeconomic gaps between African-Americans and other ethnicities. Our hearing today will address matters of particular concern to African-American males in the District of Columbia and other metropolitan areas.

The statistics are startling: African-American males are seven times more likely to be murdered than their Caucasian counterparts. The African-American rate of HIV-AIDS infection is five times higher than that of Caucasians. African-Americans comprise 38 percent of AIDS cases reported to the U.S. Center for Disease Control. The unemployment rate for African-Americans is at 10.1 percent. These statistics should concern us all. I hope our witnesses will be able to shed some light on their underlying causes and what the public and private sectors can do about it.

How can we expect African-American males to dream high when they are fraught with disappointment, with violence and low expectations? Obviously we can't.

I hope to see increased opportunities for the participation of African-Americans in the political process as voters and candidates. There are countless African-American men with the potential to become leaders of the District of Columbia and cities and States

across the country, yet too few of them get to the point where they can exercise that potential. It is important for the community and the government to foster an environment in which they can succeed and positively influence the course of events pertinent to African-Americans and all of us.

We have to remember that the boys of today will become tomorrow's fathers, and so our goal is to identify problems affecting African-Americans and build awareness of these issues. I applaud the efforts of the Commission and hope today's hearing will help the Commission develop an action plan that will benefit the African-American community.

I also want to particularly thank Congresswoman Norton for her work with the District of Columbia Commission on Black Men and Boys and other issues in the city. She has taken a leadership role in this.

We have a distinguished panel of witnesses before us today and I look forward to hearing their testimony. I thank you for sharing your experiences and suggestions with us.

I want to recognize Ms. Norton for an opening statement and again thank you for bringing this before us.

[The prepared statement of Chairman Tom Davis follows:]

Statement

Chairman Tom Davis

Committee on Government Reform

"Black Men and Boys In The District Of Columbia And Their Impact On The Future Of The Black Family."

September 12, 2003

Good morning. A quorum being present, the Committee on Government Reform will come to order. Welcome to today's hearing on Black men and boys in the District of Columbia and their impact on the future of the Black family.

Although we've seen some remarkable progress over the past several decades, there remain significant socioeconomic gaps between African Americans and other ethnicities. Our hearing today will address matters of particular concern to African American males in the District of Columbia and other metropolitan areas.

The statistics are startling. African American males are seven times more likely to be murdered than their Caucasian counterparts. The African-American rate of HIV/AIDS infection is five times higher than that for Caucasians. African Americans comprise 38% of AIDS cases reported to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The unemployment rate for African Americans is at 10.1%.

These statistics should concern us all. I hope our witnesses will be able to shed some light on their underlying causes, and what the public and private sectors can do about it.

How can we expect African American males to dream high when they are fraught with disappointment, with violence, and with low expectations? We cannot. I hope to see increased opportunities for the participation of African Americans in the political process as voters and candidates. There are countless African American men with the potential to become leaders of the District of Columbia and cities and states around the country – but too few of them get to the point where they can exercise that potential.

It is important for the community and the government to foster an environment in which they can succeed and positively influence the course of events pertinent to African Americans, and to us all. We must remember that the boys of today will become tomorrow's fathers.

It is our goal to identify problems affecting African-Americans and build awareness about these issues. I applaud the efforts of the Commission and hope today's hearing will help the Commission develop an action plan that will benefit the African American community.

I would also like to thank Congresswoman Norton for her work with the District of Columbia Commission on Black Men and Boys and other issues in the District of Columbia.

We have a distinguished panel of witnesses before us. I look forward to hearing testimony from our witnesses and thank them for sharing their experiences and suggestions with us.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Indeed I want to begin by saying how grateful I am to my good friend Tom Davis for agreeing to this hearing, for putting his staff to work on preparations, and of course, to the majority staff for their assistance. My special thanks, as well, to the staff of the ranking member, Henry Waxman. Representative Waxman's able staff has devoted many hours of splendid expert effort to the work of the D.C. Commission on Black Men and Boys and to securing a particularly outstanding group of witnesses for today's hearing.

This hearing springs from the ground-breaking efforts of a different kind of commission. The D.C. Commission on Black Men and Boys consists of African-American men with special credibility with black men and boys in the District of Columbia. This Commission and its composition and its dedicated work have made the point that leadership to resolve the issues facing black males must begin with black men themselves. The Commission has been ably assisted by an advisory board of eight very distinguished experts who have added a wealth of invaluable knowledge and assistance to the Commission's work.

I would like to note the presence of one of the commissioners. All of the commissioners, I want to be quick to say, have their day jobs and, therefore, have been volunteers with the work on the Commission. But one of the commissioners, besides the distinguished Chair, Mr. Starke, is here; and I would like to ask him—and one of the advisory commissioners is here, Mr. Larry Quick—would you stand? And of the advisory commissioners, Dr. Mark Turner, would you stand? I appreciate very much what you and the other commissioners and advisory members have done. Thank you very much.

A major difference this Commission brings is its action orientation. Generally, commissions make their contribution through important recommendations but when it comes to black men and their relationship to black family life today, it is much too late for recommendations. The issues are so urgent that they need to be addressed for immediate action by our country and city in general and by the African-American community in particular.

I will not rehearse the many problems that need attention. The statistics in and of themselves are so unbearable, they simply must not be allowed to get any worse; 50 percent of U.S. prisoners are black males, although black males are only 6 percent of the total U.S. population, for example, or the most heartbreaking of all, 70 percent of black children are born to never-married women, thereby assuring a childhood of poverty for many.

We have been focused on the symptoms of the decline of black family life. How to improve poor performance in school or to reduce juvenile crime, for example, knowing full well that children from intact families are far less likely to have these or other problems. We are centered largely on the symptoms, because we have not figured out a way to get ahold of one of the primary causes, the large and awesome problem of family dissolution at its roots.

This problem is particularly frightening because it is global and because of its necessary effects on children. In American society, family decline is further along in black America, but it is spreading at lightning speed to white and Hispanic Americans as well. The Commission is suggesting that one important way to get ahold of

black family deterioration is to take on issues facing black men and boys in work, in preparation for work, in pursuit of education, in incarceration, in reentry from prison, in juvenile justice and in the perils of street life to boys and young men.

This, of course, is a tall order. However, it is easier than dealing only with the devastating consequences to African-American boys, men, to their families, to the black community and to our country. It is easier than sitting and watching a generation of attractive, well-educated young African-American women who may never marry and have families because comparable young black men were diverted as youths into street life, crime and prison. It is easier than tackling the worst effects of all, the permanent damage to an entire innocent generation of black children. And it is easier than seeing the end of the African-American community as we have known it, where mothers and fathers together have always forged a better life for their children, notwithstanding the burdens of racism and discrimination.

An important reason for focusing on black males is that family deterioration began with problems that directly affected black men in particular. The rapid flight of decent-paying manufacturing jobs beginning in the 1960's correlates almost exactly with black family decline. Men without jobs do not form families. The drug economy, the underground economy and the gun economy all moved into African-American communities to replace the legitimate jobs of the traditional economy.

Jobs and education are critical cornerstones. With all the rhetoric among government officials about family values, government has failed to focus on how decent jobs almost automatically lead young men to pursue marriage and family life.

However, the black community cannot depend on macro solutions alone because they take time, and time is not on our side. Indeed, time has run out. Thus, the Commission is right to address its action mandate across the board, and not only to government that is responsible for delivering change in a democratic society.

Recognizing what is at stake, the Commission has said it will address its action plan to all the sectors that must take responsibility for short and long-term solutions, including parents and educators, business and labor and community and neighborhoods. The Commission will use the very successful local hearings it has held, all very well-attended from the community of residents in the District, will use its work with the Nation's preeminent African-American think tank, the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, and will use today's hearing to prepare its action plan to be presented in a formal ceremony to Mayor Tony Williams, City Council Chair Linda Cropp, Superintendent Paul Vance, business and labor leaders and representatives of community and nonprofit organizations for this reason.

I am especially grateful for today's witnesses. The issues before the Commission on Black Men and Boys need the thoughtful, problem-solving work associated with each of their careers. The testimony our witnesses will offer today is critical to the more urgent and concentrated search for answers and actions that have eluded the larger society as much as they have eluded our city.

I thank our witnesses for the effort they have put into the preparation of their testimony and I very much look forward to hearing from each of them today.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Eleanor Holmes Norton follows:]

ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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Opening Statement of Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton
Committee on Government Reform
"Black Men and Boys in the District of Columbia and Their Impact on the Future of the Black Family"

September 12, 2003

I am grateful to my friend Tom Davis for agreeing to this hearing, for putting his staff to work on preparations, and of course, to the majority staff for their assistance. My special thanks, as well, to the staff of Ranking Member Henry Waxman. Representative Waxman's able staff has devoted many hours of splendid expert effort to the work of the D.C. Commission on Black Men and Boys and to securing a particularly outstanding group of witnesses for today's hearing.

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I will not rehearse the many problems that need attention. The statistics in and of themselves are so unbearable they simply must not be allowed to get any worse: The 50% of U.S. prisoners who are black males, although black males are only 6% of the total U.S. population, for example, or the most heart breaking of all, the 70% of black children born to never- married women therefore assuring many a childhood of poverty.

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We have been focused on the symptoms of the decline of black family life--how to improve poor performance in school or to reduce juvenile crime, for example--knowing full well that children from intact families are less likely to have these or other problems. We are centered largely on the symptoms because we have not figured out a way to get a hold of one of the primary causes--the large and awesome problem of family dissolution at its roots. This problem is particularly frightening because it is global. In American society, family decline is further along in Black America, but it is spreading at lightning speed to white and Hispanic Americans as well. The Commission is suggesting that one important way to get a hold of black family deterioration is to take on issues facing black men and boys in work and in preparation for work, in pursuit of education, in incarceration, in reentry from prison, in juvenile justice, and in the perils of street life to boys and young men.

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For this reason, I am especially grateful to today's witnesses. The issues before the Commission on Black Men and Boys need the thoughtful problem-solving work associated with each of their careers. The testimony our witnesses will offer today is critical to the more urgent and concentrated search for answers and actions that have eluded the larger society as much as they have our city. I thank our witnesses for the effort they have put into preparation of their testimony and I very much look forward to hearing from each of them.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

And now we move basically to center stage here. We really have an all-star cast in front of us. Our panel is George Starke from the D.C. Black Men and Boys Commission; Charles Mann from the Good Samaritan Foundation; Dr. William Julius Wilson from Harvard University; Paul Quander, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency; Dr. Jay Cummings from Texas Southern University; and Robin Gwathney from Rutgers University.

It is the policy of this committee that all witnesses be sworn before your testimony. So if you would rise with me and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Starke, I am going to start with you. I had Wes Unsell in this position one time, sworn before the committee when he was with the—then the Bullets; and I asked him under oath if the Bullets were going to have a winning season; and under oath he said, "Well, I can promise you exciting basketball." We could have held him in contempt that year, but we let it slide.

But we are happy to have you here and thanks for all your work.

STATEMENT OF GEORGE STARKE, CHAIRMAN, D.C. BLACK MEN AND BOYS COMMISSION

Mr. STARKE. I am the chairman of the Commission on Black Men and Boys in the District of Columbia and also the founder of the Excel Institute, which is an academic and technical job facility; and we focus specifically on automotive technology. As such, and also, obviously, being a black man, I think I am qualified to be a witness here. And I was thinking how I was going to begin my talk and Congress looks to me to do something interesting. And I was thinking just now, when you were speaking, Ms. Norton, that my father died about 6 months ago. I am 55 years old and the truth is, I miss him every day. And I think about the leadership and guidance I got from him that I miss today. I am 55, and I am a relatively successful person. I have been to Super Bowls, I run companies and institutions. How then can we expect an 11-year-old boy to make it?

You know, with the upshot of the Commission hearings and Commission meetings and my experience in the neighborhoods and my growing up, what we probably could have figured out without any of that is that we have just a tremendous volume of young people who didn't do well in school because they didn't go to school, because when they were 11 years old, they had no father. And the mother would say, "Go to school." They had a mother for sure, but the absence of fathers in our neighborhoods and for our young people has just been devastating. So then what happens, you have people drop out of school. And they drop out of school, and at some point they need to make money to take their girlfriend to the movies or eat; and without any education, they end up in the drug business. And then with the drug business comes violence and death and probably incarceration if they don't get shot. And it's a cycle which we're all well aware of, which I thought you have outlined very clearly. The question then is what to do about it. What do we do with where we are?

It's clear that leadership is important on an individual level and, therefore, that brings you to mentoring. There's got to be a way

that we can institute formally some kind of mentoring ability for our young people that are leaderless. There has to be a way to do that, and that is the finding of the Commission.

And then, of course, there's the question of education and jobs. When I retired from football, I went into the automobile business and I built a company in Maryland called George Starke Ford. One of my biggest difficulties in the automobile industry is finding trained technicians. While I was scrambling around trying to find trained technicians, I kept reading about 10 kids shooting another 10 kids in Washington, DC. And my feeling at the time, which has been borne out, is that a lot of the violence in Washington is job-related. It's not really a crime issue. And, you know, to put people in jail just doesn't solve the job issue. It's about training.

So I am 1 of 2,000 car dealerships in Washington. None of us can find techs. You have this large, unskilled labor pool in Washington. As everybody knows, what I did, I sold my companies and I built the Excel Institute. And, in fact, we have a highly successful venture for anyone above the age of 16.

Washington has a literacy issue. You have to address that as part of your education, so we are academic for those. If you can't read, you can come to us. We'll teach you to read and write, and you get your GED; and at the same time, we teach a trade that we know has 100 percent placement. Not only is it placing 100 percent of the people, but it's a good job. You can buy a house, buy a car. Technicians make a lot of money, so it's a coupling of the academic and the technical, which allows us to do what we do best, which is fill that specific job niche in the Washington area.

You have to be 16 to come to us, as I said earlier. But you'd be surprised. We fill—whether you're 16, 17, 20 or 25, that need for family leadership is still there. So the Excel Institute sort of accidentally became the local parent for a lot of our people.

We have about 150 students. Nobody pays any money. It's a 2-year program; it's like a junior college. And so I think if—when we look at the problem in Washington specifically, I think the issue of leadership on an individual level, which would be mentorship; but at the end of the day, it does come back to jobs and the ability to make money and have a family, because otherwise you end up in jail.

And, you know, coming out—Mr. Quander is going to speak to this—you have a lot of men coming back to Washington, DC, who have been incarcerated and they're coming back the same way they left. They had no skills when they left, and they are coming back the same way they left.

So, No. 1, I think on the Federal level we need to consider some kind of education program for those guys or gals who are incarcerated, so they don't come back the same way they left; that they can come back and provide for their families if they have one, or not find themselves in a situation that puts them back in jail.

Thank you. That's my initial statement.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Starke follows:]

The District of Columbia Commission on Black Men and Boys
Mr. George Starke, Chairman
"Empowering our Men and Boys to Save the Black Family"

TESTIMONY OF GEORGE STARKE, CHAIRMAN COMMISSION ON BLACK MEN AND BOYS

BEFORE THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM ON BLACK MEN AND BOYS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE FUTURE OF THE BLACK FAMILY

SEPTEMBER 12, 2003

Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton established the District of Columbia Commission on Black Men and Boys, in consultation with the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies with initial funding from the U.S. Department of Labor. The purpose of the Commission is to draw upon community experience and expert testimony to understand the impediments to success that African American young men and boys face, identify opportunities to improve services from the government and private sector, and propose a concrete plan of action to help overcome these obstacles. It is hoped that this work my be useful not only to federal agencies but also to local jurisdictions, who also may want to establish such commissions and tackle these issues.

The Commission is deliberately small. It consists of twelve men, including an elected official, a minister, a youth program director, and community activists, who work or volunteer or have experience working directly with black boys or

men. An Advisory Board with a wide variety of both scholarly and practical expertise on issues relating to problems facing boys and young black men supports the commission. Names and occupations are attached with the written testimony for further review.

As part of the Commission's work, the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies completed a report in February 2002 on *Youth Development Needs and Capacities in the District of Columbia.* The Commission has also held three community town hall hearings that have addressed issues concerning education and training, the importance of family, mentors and role models, and the criminal justice system.

Recommendations:

The current recommendations set forth by the Commission and its Advisors are based on testimony provided by community leaders, and input from Commission members. Thus far, the following recommendations were determined to be the significant social, educational, economic, health, and justice needs of Black Men and Boys in the District of Columbia.

1. **WE URGE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS TO EXERCISE GREATER COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION OF SERVICES ON BEHALF OF BLACK MEN AND BOYS.**

There is a serious disconnect between services and programs for Black men and boys and their utilization by residents and some duplication and overlap that leaves too many boys unreached. Many boys and young men are more reluctant to utilize programs than are girls and young women. The culture of the streets keeps many boys and young men from coming forward for programs, training or education. To be affective, programs and educators need to fan out and reach out to boys and young men.

Local government agencies and federally funded programs must do a better job of connecting existing services. For example, police detaining youth should be connected to the various schools, mentoring, and other social service programs whenever possible. The impact of what individual local agencies do is significantly enhanced when there is greater coordination and collaboration of services.

2. **WE URGE GREATER FAMILY SUPPORT, COMMUNITY SUPPORT, AND HOUSING OPPORTUNTIES FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS.**

Chronic problems facing Black men and boys can be effectively addressed through resources available in families and community agencies. Strong families and communities produce responsible men.

Although there are an abundance of resources available for strengthening families and neighborhoods, the lack of effective communication efforts to educate the public of their availability hinders usage of these resources.

Proper housing is a problem particularly acute among low-income families, especially men re-entering society from prison. Finding stable and affordable housing in the District of Columbia further exacerbates the problems faced by Black men and boys and contributes to the breakdown of families and communities.

3. **WE URGE THE PROMOTION AND THE PROVISION OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS.**

Effective community education programs regarding the importance of sound physical and mental health among Black men and boys are

extremely limited. The direct effects on the overall development of Black men and boys are too rarely addressed as a point of restoration for those men and boys who are responsible and purpose driven. Additionally, the effects of childhood traumas and parents rearing practices need to be a part of the broader discussion that advocates for increased counseling and support groups for Black men and boys.

4. **WE URGE GREATER AVAILABILITY OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS.**

There must be greater attention given to addressing the need for alternative education strategies that bridge the gap between employability and the marketability of Black Men and Boys. For example, there is considerable new development and building construction occurring in Washington, DC. Employment opportunities created by these developments can increase skills and reduce the unemployment rates of Black men. The absence of vocational training in the public schools and the lack of apprenticeship programs have stifled the development of employability skills among Black men.

However, Congresswoman Norton has gotten GSA to commit to requiring apprentice programs in all federal construction and renovation. This is an important example of how training and high paying jobs can be developed.

Numerous reports, including the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies February 2002 Report for our Commission, show the incredible dropout rates of black boys from traditional public school. Too little emphasis has been put on vocational training as an option.

5. **WE URGE GREATER AVAILABILITY OF RE-ENTRY AND SECOND CHANCE PROGRAMS FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS.**

Almost 50%of prison inmates are Africa-American males. With the great influx of Black Men coming back into the community from prison, government has focused on their rehabilitation through individual services, a very important new emphasis here in the District where such services were not previously available. However, there needs to be a greater effort to include the family and community in the re-entry process to insure a successful second chance for men to become responsible and productive citizens, fathers and family members.

6. **WE URGE EXPANDED JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM FOR BLACK BOYS.**

Men who are incarcerated often are boys who have been in detention centers. Greater resources need to be directed to the prevention of youth detention and recidivism.

7. **WE URGE THE AVAILABILITY OF MORE MENTORING PROGRAMS FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS.**

A wide variety of methods for mentoring programs allow for increased options that can be customized to fit what is needed in the District of Columbia for men and boys. In particular, business oriented mentoring should be expanded.

Expanding opportunities for Black men and boys in the District of Columbia will require leadership from the citizens, the local and federal governments, the private sector, the schools, faith-organizations, and the community at large.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Mann.

STATEMENT OF CHARLES MANN, GOOD SAMARITAN FOUNDATION, c/o MONK AND MANN VENTURES

Mr. MANN. First of all——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. The green light you have gives you 5 minutes. After 4 minutes, it turns orange and we try to keep statements to 5 minutes.

It is an important issue, but if you need extra time—thank you.

Mr. MANN. I thought you were taking some of my time.

Thank you, first, for having me here. I take it very seriously—the issue—having lived in this skin and being a black man for 42 years. I look at every opportunity as an opportunity to further the cause of people, but in this case, black men and boys.

Overcoming obstacles to success, young black men and boys need role models. Those role models need to not be on the various fields of play. They need to be in the homes; they need to be in the classrooms; they need to be in the neighborhoods.

I'm not talking about a role model such as these athletes. And being a former athlete, I understand what that means. I'm saying that we need to have fathers and businessmen and people like that that give of their time and of their lives to help pull up these young people.

And there I'm talking about all people, not just black people. They need to be mentored by men of integrity, people with moral character, people with strong spiritual foundations, because this is what we are dying of, as you know.

We look at separation of church and state. We're looking at taking God out of everything. That's what this country was founded on. The money we spend has In God We Trust. We need to get back to having a firm spiritual foundation. And when we ask these young black men and boys to turn from something, we have to have them turn to something. So we're asking them to turn from a life of crime. They've got to have something substantial to turn to. Jesus is the rock. That is the foundation that we need to perform or encourage these young men and boys to go to. And they need to turn to something like that. And Darrell Green had a 20-year successful career; Art Monk—some of my heroes, all these guys, what makes them different from some of the other athletes that you see out there is that these guys are grounded and rooted in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. That's the difference. They were great football players or stars, but it's the moral character or integrity that is found in Jesus Christ.

I just took 2 minutes.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I just told Ms. Norton I will give you more time.

Ms. NORTON. And Ms. Norton is very interested in how God helps those who help themselves in your program.

Mr. MANN. Thank you. I appreciate it. You've been a big advocate of the Good Samaritan Foundation, and I really appreciate that.

What are some of the particular challenges these boys and young men face? First of all, lack of opportunities. I'm not, you know, saying anything earth-shattering there, but there's lack of opportuni-

ties, stereotypes you have. And to this day, and I'll change it a little bit, my wife will walk into Nordstrom's—I have been married for 19 years to one woman; we have three children. But my wife will walk into Nordstrom's with some jeans and a tee-shirt on, and she won't be helped. She's just looking. She doesn't have the wherewithal to buy, so salespeople overlook her.

Then I'll walk in with her; now they're falling all over us. And my wife wonders—well, she doesn't wonder why, she knows why. But that's not right, these preconceived notions, these stereotypes, you know. Walk up on somebody—me, as a black man, walk up on somebody in the evening and say, "Hi;" or go to my car, and I frighten people. I'm a black man and that means that you've got to watch out. It's sad. But I have three children who have been born and raised in the suburbs. When we go into the inner city, my kids are somewhat frightened at times when they see a group of black men and boys—and that's in my own family—because of the stereotypes, distractions in the community and in the environment.

These kids, these young black men and boys, grow up with death and violence all around them—killings on their doorstep. And the peer pressure, yeah, we all know about peer pressure, but guess what, we have a different peer pressure. A black man isn't supposed to be smart; and he's getting that pressure from his other black men and friends, you're not supposed to be real smart. "Why are you working real hard in school? Why are you doing that? The man ain't going to give you a job so why are you doing it?" So there's pressure right from them not to succeed and be successful.

How do we prepare these young men for post-secondary education and/or entry into the work force? Well, the Good Samaritan Foundation does a walk-through of the college application process. We teach them how to research their schools of interest. We have college fairs and tours. We have college mentors come back and talk to these kids and tell them about the pitfalls and the struggles that are out there. We assist them in finding scholarship opportunities, career preparatory workshops, self-assessments to find their interests and then find the careers that match those interests.

We also do cover letter writing and resume writing seminars; we do job shadowing. Anytime you have some job shadowing opportunities here, we would love to put some of our kids to work right here; and we do internships.

The recommendation I would have is that the government do a better job of partnering with groups that want to provide training that leads to opportunity, employment opportunities. We've got to make ourselves more available. The jobs are here. We just need to give these young black men and boys opportunities. Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Mann follows:]

Statement of Charles Mann, Good Samaritan Foundation
Before the Committee on Government Reform
Hearing on
Black Men and Boys in the District of Columbia and their Impact on the Future of the Black Family

September 12, 2003

Overcoming obstacles to academic success?

1. These young men need "role models", that are NOT found on the various fields of play, but in the HOMES and CLASSROOMS, and in the NEIGHBORHOODS. They need to be mentored by men of integrity, character, and strong Spiritual leaders. Someone rooted and grounded in Biblical principles, so when they ask these young men to turn from a life of disorder they can point them to Godly principles that lead to life and peace. They need to have something to live for, other than the new Allen Iverson shoes or an opportunity to play in the NBA or NFL.

What are some of the particular challenges these boys or young men face?

Lack of opportunities, Stereotypes (people already have a negative image of young black men), Distractions in the community/environment, (people killed right outside their doorsteps), peer pressure (a black man is pressure to not be too smart, it's not cool, "why would I waste my time studying, aren't nobody going to give me a job anyway"), Little or no support at home from parents.

How do we prepare these young men and boys for post-secondary education and/or entry into the workforce?

Walkthrough the college application process.

Teach then how to research the different schools of interest.

College Fairs and Tours

College Mentors talking about their experiences.

Assist them in finding scholarship opportunities.

Career preparatory workshops.

Self assessments to find interests and careers that match.

Cover Letter writing and Resume writing seminars

Job Shadowing

Internships

Any recommendations I might have!

Government can do a better job partnering with groups that want to provide training that leads to employment opportunities.

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Government can do a better job partnering with groups that want to provide training that leads to employment opportunities.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Dr. Wilson. Thanks for being with us.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM JULIUS WILSON, Ph.D., KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Mr. WILSON. Congressman Davis, I am pleased to have the opportunity to address this committee and I would like to congratulate Congresswoman Norton for establishing the Commission on Black Men and Boys. I think she is a real visionary, and I hope that her efforts represent a major step toward addressing a serious domestic problem of social and economic decline of African-American males.

Now, in my presentation, I would like to focus particularly on the employment woes of low-skilled black males. And since my presentation is restricted to 5 minutes, I will refer you to a larger written statement that I have submitted.

In the last three decades, low-skilled African-American males have encountered increasing difficulty gaining access to jobs, even menial jobs. And although the employment and wages of all low-skilled workers improved during the economic boom period of the late 1990's and into 2000, the country is now in a jobless recovery following the 2001 recession. Jobless rates, especially those in the inner city are on the rise again. The ranks of idle, street corner men have swelled since the early 1970's and include a growing proportion of adult males who routinely work in and tolerate low-wage jobs when they are available.

Now, what has caused the deterioration in the employment prospects of low-skilled black males? Although blacks continue to confront racial barriers in the labor market, many inner-city African-American workers have been victimized by the decreased relative demand for low-skilled labor. The computer revolution, that is the spread of new technologies, is displacing low-skilled workers and rewarding the more highly trained. And the growing internationalization of economic activity has increasingly pitted low-skilled workers in the United States against low-skilled workers around the world. And one of the legacies of historic racism in America is that a disproportionate number of African-American workers are unskilled. Accordingly, the decreased relative demand for low-skilled labor has had a greater adverse impact on blacks than on whites.

In addition, over the past several decades, black males have been displaced disproportionately from the manufacturing sector, a trend that has continued up to today as black males have lost more than 300,000 manufacturing jobs since 2001, the sharpest manufacturing job loss in percentage terms of any ethnic group.

Today, most of the new jobs for workers with limited education and experience are in the service sector, which hires relatively more women. The movement of lower-skilled men, including black men, into this sector of the economy has been slow. For inner-city black male workers, the problems created by the decreased relative demand for labor have been aggravated by negative employer attitudes. Research reveals that employers generally consider inner-city black males to be either uneducated, uncooperative, unstable, or dishonest.

Unfortunately, the negative effects of employer perceptions of inner-city black males have been compounded by the restructuring of the economy. The increasing shift to service industries has resulted in the greater demand for workers who can effectively serve and relate to the consumer. Many employers feel that unlike women and immigrants who have recently expanded the labor pool in the low-wage service sector, inner-city black males lack such qualities. Consequently, their rejection in the labor market gradually grows over time.

The more these men complain or manifest their job dissatisfaction, the less attractive they seem to employers. They therefore encounter greater discrimination when they search for employment and clash more often with supervisors when they are hired. They express feelings of many inner-city black males about their jobs and job prospects, reflecting their plummeting position in a changing economy.

Continuing lack of success in the labor market reduces the ability of many inner-city fathers to adequately support their children, which, in turn, lowers their self-confidence as providers and creates antagonistic relationships with the mother of their children. Convenient rationalizations shared and reinforced by men in these restrictive economic situations emerge. They reject the institution of marriage in ways that enhance, not diminish their self-esteem. The outcome is the failure to meet the societal norms of fatherhood.

Programs that focus on the cultural problems pertaining to fatherhood without confronting the broader and more fundamental issues of restricted economic opportunities have limited chances to succeed. In my view, the most effective fatherhood programs in the inner city will be those that address attitudes, norms and behaviors in combination with local and national attempts to improve job prospects. Only then will fathers have a realistic chance to adequately care for their children and envision a better life for themselves.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wilson follows:]

The Economic Plight of Inner-city Black Males*

William Julius Wilson
Lewis P. and Linda L. Geyser University Professor
Harvard University

*Testimony delivered September 12, 2003 before the Committee on Government Reform, US Congress House of Representatives

The Economic Plight of Inner-city Black Males*

William Julius Wilson

Harvard University

Congressman Davis and Congressman Waxman, I am pleased to have this opportunity to address this important committee. I would like to congratulate Congresswomen Eleanor Holmes Norton for establishing the Commission on Black Men and Boys. Congresswoman Norton is a real visionary and I hope that her efforts represent a major step toward addressing a serious domestic problem – the social and economic decline of African-American males. In my presentation, I would like to focus particularly on the employment woes of low-skilled black males.

The Problem

In the last three decades, low-skilled African-American males have encountered increasing difficulty gaining access to jobs, even menial jobs. Although the employment and wages of all low-skilled workers improved during the economic boom period of the late 1990s and into 2000, the country is now in a jobless recovery. Jobless rates, especially those in the inner city,

are on the rise once again. The ranks of idle street-corner men have swelled since the early 1970s, and include a growing proportion of adult males who routinely work in and tolerate low-wage jobs when they are available (Wilson 1996).

What has caused the deterioration in the employment prospects of low-skilled black males? Although blacks continue to confront racial barriers in the labor market, many inner-city African-American workers have been victimized by the decreased relative demand for low-skilled labor. The computer revolution (i.e., the spread of new technologies) is displacing low-skilled workers and rewarding the more highly trained; and the growing internationalization of economic activity has increasingly pitted low-skilled workers in the United States against low-skilled workers around the world. These changes have benefited highly educated or highly skilled workers, while lower- skilled workers face the growing threat of eroding wages and job displacement (Katz 1996 and Schwartzman 1997).

One of the legacies of historic racism in America is a disproportionate number of African American workers who are unskilled. Accordingly, the decreased relative demand for low-skilled labor has had a greater adverse impact on blacks than on whites. Whereas the number of skilled African Americans (including managers, professionals and technicians) has markedly increased in the last few years, the proportion of those who are unskilled is still relatively large. Why? Because the black population, held back by the

cumulative experiences of racial restrictions, was overwhelmingly unskilled as late as the mid-20th century (Schwartzman 1997).

Recent research into the urban labor market by the economist Harry Holzer (1996) demonstrates the magnitude of the problem. Based on a survey of 3,000 employers in Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, and Los Angeles, Holzer reported that only 5 to 10 percent of the jobs in central-city areas for non-college graduates require very few cognitive skills or work credentials. A much greater premium is being placed on workers who have the basic skills of writing, reading, and performing arithmetic calculations, and who also know how to operate a computer. Moreover, most employers in Holzer's study indicated that they require a high school degree, job references, and particular kinds of work experience. Given the oversupply of unskilled workers relative to the number of low-skill jobs, many poorly trained and low-educated individuals experience difficulty landing jobs even in a strong local economy (Holzer 1996 and Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 1996). This is especially true for black men.

In addition, over the past several decades low-skilled black males have been displaced disproportionately from the manufacturing sector, a trend that has continued up to today, as black males have lost more than 300,000 manufacturing jobs since 2001, the sharpest job loss in percentage terms of any ethnic group. Today, most of the new jobs for workers with limited education and experience are in the service sector, which hires relatively

more women. The movement of lower-skilled men into the growth sectors of the economy has been slow. For example, only a small percentage of men have penetrated pink-collar jobs like practical nursing in recent years. Indeed, the striking gender differences in recent job growth are partly due to the large concentration of women in the expanding social service sector. Lower-educated women, unlike their male counterparts, are working more, not less, than in previous years. The employment patterns of lower-educated women, like those with higher training and education, reflect the growth of social service industries (Lerman and Rein forthcoming).

For inner-city black male workers, the problems created by the decreased relative demand for labor have been aggravated by negative employer attitudes. Interviews of a representative sample of Chicago-area employers by my research team in the late 1980s revealed that a substantial majority considered inner-city black males to be either uneducated, uncooperative, unstable, or dishonest (Wilson 1996). For example, a suburban drug store manager commented:

> It's unfortunate but, in my business I think overall [black men] tend to be known to be dishonest. I think that's too bad but that's the image they have. (*Interviewer*: So you think it's an image problem?) *Respondent*: An image problem of being dishonest men and lazy. They're known to be lazy. They are [laughs]. I hate to tell you, but. It's all an image though. Whether they are or not, I don't know, but,

it's an image that is perceived, (*Interviewer*: I see. How do you think that image was developed?) *Respondent:* Go look in the jails [laughs].

A suburban employer of an electrical services firm, concerned about theft, offered the following unique explanation for why he would not hire an inner-city black male:

> If you're in a white neighborhood . . . and you have a manufacturing firm and a ghetto person comes there to apply, it doesn't make any difference what color his skin is... if you know that's where he's from you know several things. One is that if you give him a job there, he's going to be unbelievably pressured to give information to his peer group in the ghetto. . . about the security system, the comings and goings of what's of value there that we could rip off. He's not a crook. He wants no part of it. But he lives in an area where he may be physically or in danger of his life if he doesn't provide the information to the people that live around him. As a manager, I know that. And I'm not going to hire him because of that. I'm not discriminating against him because he's black, I'm discriminating against him because he has a problem that he's going to bring [it] to me. Now the fact that he is black and it happens that the people around him are black is only coincidental. In Warsaw they were Jews. They had the same problem.

A president of an inner-city manufacturing firm expressed a different reservation about employing black males from certain ghetto neighborhoods:

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> If somebody gave me their address, uh, Cabrini Green I might unavoidably have some concerns. *Interviewer:* What would your concerns be? *Respondent:* That the poor guy probably would be frequently unable to get to work and . . . I probably would watch him more carefully even if it wasn't fair, than I would with somebody else. I know what I should do though is recognize that here's a guy that is trying to get out of his situation and probably will work harder than somebody else who's already out of there and he might be the best one around here. But I, I think I would have to struggle accepting that premise at the beginning.

Because of the prevalence of such attitudes, the lack of access to informal job networks is a notable problem for black males, as suggested by the following employer's comments to our interviewer:

> All of a sudden, they take a look at a guy, and unless he's got an in, the reason why I hired this black kid the last time is cause my neighbor said to me, yeah I used him for a few [days], he's good, and I said, you know what, I'm going to take a chance. But it was a recommendation, But other than that, I've got a walk-in, and, who knows? And I think that for the most part, a guy sees a black man, he's a bit hesitant, because I don't know.

Such attitudes are classic examples of what economists call statistical discrimination: employers make general assumptions about inner-city black

male workers and reach decisions based on those assumptions without reviewing systematically the qualifications of an individual applicant. The net effect is that many inner-city black male applicants are never given the opportunity to prove their qualifications on an individual level. Although it is true that some of these men eschew entry-level jobs because of the working conditions and low wages, many others would readily accept such employment. Statistical discrimination, although representing elements of class bias against poor inner-city workers, is clearly a racial practice. Far more inner-city black males are effectively screened out of employment than Latino or white males applying for the same jobs (Wilson 1996).

Unfortunately, the negative effects of employer perceptions of inner-city black males have been compounded by the restructuring of the economy. The increasing shift to service industries has resulted in a greater demand for workers who can effectively serve and relate to the consumer. Many employers feel that unlike women and immigrants, who have recently expanded the labor pool in the low-wage service sector, inner-city black males lack such qualities. Consequently, their rejection in the labor market gradually grows over time.

This is especially the case for the low-skilled black males who have prison records. The ranks of ex-offenders have increased significantly in the past several decades because rates of incarceration have soared even during periods when the crime rate had declined. Ex-offenders have a much more

difficult time finding employment. According to one estimate, probably 30 percent of all civilian young adult black males (16 to 34) are ex-offenders (Holzer, Offner and Sorensen, 1930).

To repeat, because of the decreased relative demand for low-skill labor, inner-city black males, including ex-offenders, are forced to turn to the low-wage service sector for employment, where they compete, often unsuccessfully, with the growing number of female and immigrant workers. The more these men complain or manifest their job dissatisfaction, the less attractive they seem to employers. They therefore encounter greater discrimination when they search for employment and clash more often with supervisors when they are hired. The expressed feelings of many inner-city black males about their jobs and job prospects reflect their plummeting position in a changing economy (Wilson 1996).

The economic woes of low-skilled black males, like the economic problems of all disadvantaged workers, subside in a strong economy featuring a tight labor market. The problem is that in recent years tight labor markets have been of relatively short duration, frequently followed by a recession that either wiped out previous gains for many workers or did not allow others to fully recover from a previous period of economic stagnation. It would take sustained tight labor markets over many years to draw back those discouraged inner-city workers who have dropped out of the labor market altogether, some for very long periods of time.

In this connection, the nation recently concluded one of the longest economic recoveries in the last half century. During that recovery disadvantaged groups advanced economically. Real wage growth for low-skilled workers was quite impressive from 1996 to 2000. For example, except for male workers at the ninetieth percentile of the wage distribution, those at the thirtieth percentile and below experienced the highest percentage hourly wage increase during this period. Increases in the minimum wage during President Clinton's second term in office and unexpectedly low inflation help to account for some of this wage growth, but the prolonged strong economy undoubtedly contributed.

Also, the ranks of those in the labor market who are out of work for more than six months – the long-term jobless– declined from almost two million in January 1993 to about 700,000 in December of 2000. Moreover, the unemployment rate of high school dropouts declined from 12 percent in 1992 to just 6 percent at the end of year 2000. Most of this decline occurred between 1997 and 2000. Furthermore, the black unemployment rate dipped to 7 percent in 2000, the lowest since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began compiling comparable unemployment data by race in 1972 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000).

The positive effects of these changes are seen in even the most depressed neighborhoods of the city. A study of low-wage workers in 322 metropolitan areas, by the economists Richard Freeman and William M. Rogers, reveals

that black men aged 16 to 24 with a high school education or less--including many with prison records--were employed in greater numbers, earned larger paychecks and committed far fewer crimes than in the early 1990s (Freeman and Rogers 2000).

The benefits of a strong economy, particularly a sustained tight labor market, for low-skilled workers should be emphasized in economic policy discussions. Unlike the situation for workers in a tight labor market, in a slack labor market—a labor market with high unemployment—employers are, indeed can afford to be, more selective in recruiting and in granting promotions. They overemphasize job prerequisites and exaggerate the value of experience. In such an economic climate, disadvantaged minorities, especially those with low levels of literacy, suffer disproportionately and employer discrimination rises.

In a tight labor market, on the other hand, job vacancies are numerous, unemployment is of short duration, and wages are higher. Moreover, in a tight labor market the labor force expands because increased job opportunities not only reduce unemployment, but also draw into the labor force those workers who, in periods when the labor market is slack, respond to fading job prospects by dropping out of the labor force altogether. Thus, in a tight labor market the status of all workers—including disadvantaged minorities—improves because of lower unemployment and higher wages (Tobin 1965).

However, since 2001, economic stagnation has set in—beginning with a recession and followed by a jobless recovery. And, cost of the Iraq recovery is adding to an already huge national deficit that will, according to many economists, exacerbate the faltering economy in the years ahead. This is unfortunate. If the recent economic boom could have been extended for several more years, it would have significantly lowered the overall jobless rate in areas such as the inner-city ghetto, not only for low-skilled workers still in the labor force but for those who have been outside the labor marker for many years as well.

But, given the decreased relative demand for low-skilled labor, what will happen to low-skilled inner-city males during a prolonged economic downturn? In the absence of employment policies to enhance the job prospects of disadvantaged groups, there is little reason to assume that their long-term prospects will be anything but bleak. Why? Simply because the economic trend that has twisted against low-skilled workers, whose effects have been muted somewhat by the prolonged recovery, is unlikely to reverse itself, thereby diminishing in the long term their job prospects and earnings.

The employment problems could reach the crisis level for many inner-city job applicants who are physically isolated from places of employment and socially isolated from the informal job networks that have become a major source of job placement. The growing suburbanization of jobs, both in

manufacturing and services, has cut off inner-city minorities from many work opportunities.

Unlike previous years, labor markets today are mainly regional, and long commutes in automobiles are common. Most ghetto residents cannot afford an automobile and therefore have to rely on public transit systems that make the connection between inner-city neighborhoods and suburban job locations difficult and time consuming. To make matters worse, many inner-city residents lack information or knowledge about suburban job opportunities. In the segregated inner-city ghettos the breakdown of the informal job information network aggravates the problems of job spatial mismatch (Wilson 1996).

All of these problems elevate the labor market woes of low-skilled black males, and over the long term affects their feelings about themselves and their relations with their families. Accordingly, it is important to link attitudinal and other cultural traits with the structure of opportunity. Among these cultural traits is the commitment to fatherhood. Indeed, the lack of commitment to fatherhood among many inner-city black males is a cultural problem that grows out of restricted opportunities and constraints. More specifically, many inner-city fathers today have low self-efficacy when it comes to fatherhood whether they are willing to admit it or not. Included among the norms of fatherhood is the obligation to provide adequate and consistent material support for your family. Continuing lack of success in the

labor market reduces the ability of many inner-city men to adequately support their children, which in turn lowers their self-confidence as providers, and creates antagonistic relations with the mothers of their children. Convenient rationalizations, shared and reinforced by the men in these restrictive economic situations, emerge that reject the institution of marriage in ways that enhance, not diminish, their self esteem. The outcome is a failure to meet the societal norms of fatherhood.

However, even non-custodial fathers who are employed and want to meet the responsibilities of fatherhood face the daunting problem of the heavy child support payments now required by federal law. The child support payments represent an employment tax of 36 percent of a worker's wages. And if the non-custodial father is in arrears, the federal law allows states to deduct as much as 65 percent of his wages. Many of those who face this higher tax are ex-offenders, whose delinquent child support payments accumulated while they were in prison. The high child support payment is a disincentive to remain in the formal labor market and an incentive to move into the casual or informal labor market (Holzer, Offner and Sorensen, 2003).

Public Policy Options

Even when the economy is strong special programs are needed to enhance the employment prospects of black males, especially those who reside in segregated and isolated inner-city neighborhoods. However, in a weak economy such programs

become crucial. I have identified a number of causes of the diminishing employment prospects of inner-city black males ranging from the decreased relative demand for low-skilled labor to the growth of regional labor markets. Let me now focus on some realistic programs that could enhance their employment prospects.

First of all, I think that it is really important to promote school-to-work transition in inner-city neighborhoods with the use of special internships and apprenticeships, especially for high school seniors. Accordingly to a report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (1994), only 42 percent of black youths who had not enrolled in college had jobs in October after graduating from high school a few years earlier in June, compared with 69 percent of their white counterparts. The figure for black youngsters in inner-city neighborhoods, especially black males, are obviously even lower.

Moreover, programs such as the Jobs Corp and Youth Build should be expanded to help youth who are unemployed and in need of training and assistance in locating and securing jobs. Furthermore, skilled training programs, similar to STRIVE and Project Quest, that include both soft and hard skilled training, and job placement should be expanded. Restoring the cuts in the jobs training fund under the Workforce Investment Act would be helpful in this connection, as well as providing more funds to increase job placement and transportation programs, such as America Works, in inner-city neighborhoods (Giloth 2003).

Finally, we should review ways to relieve the work disincentives associated with the child support payments. For example, "various forms of 'arrearage

forgiveness' might be considered, especially for men who piled up arrears [in child support payments] while incarcerated or otherwise incapacitated" (Holzer, Offner and Sorensen, 2003).

Programs that focus on the cultural problems pertaining to fatherhood without confronting the broader and more fundamental issue of restricted economic opportunities have limited chances to succeed. In my view the most effective fatherhood programs in the inner city will be those that address attitudes, norms and behaviors in combination with local and national attempts to improve job prospects. Only then will fathers have a realistic chance to adequately care for their children and envision a better life for themselves.

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Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Quander, thank you for being with us.

STATEMENT OF PAUL A. QUANDER, JR., DIRECTOR, COURT SERVICES AND OFFENDER SUPERVISION AGENCY [CSOSA]

Mr. QUANDER. Chairman Davis, Congresswoman Norton, good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important topic, which is of vital interest to me as a third-generation citizen of the District of Columbia, a father, a public servant, and an African-American. My name is Paul Quander, and I'm the Director of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia.

This agency provides community supervision for individuals on pretrial detention, probation, parole and supervised release. Our mission is to reduce recidivism and to protect the public through effective supervision practices. CSOSA, my agency, supervises over 20,000 people each year. Almost all of them, over 94 percent, are African-American males.

We cannot speak of the difficulties facing African-American men and boys in this city without speaking of the criminal justice system; this is particularly true here in the District. The Washington Post reported in 1997 that nearly half of the city's black men between the ages of 18 and 50 were either involved with or being pursued by the criminal justice system. Nationally, the rate of involvement is about one-third. The District of Columbia, which has by far the highest incarceration rate in the country, has an even higher rate of incarcerating black men. Among the problems young black men face in our city, that is assuredly one of the most significant. It is far more likely today that a black male student in the District of Columbia public schools will graduate to prison rather than graduate from college.

Most of us here today have heard these statistics before. In my former job as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, I contributed to them. During my 8 years at the U.S. Attorney's office, I prosecuted and successfully convicted many African-American defendants who were involved in criminal activities. Although I believe that doing the time was a just and logical consequence of doing the crime, I know incarceration damaged the lives of individuals and the families that these men left behind.

At CSOSA, I lead a work force of more than 300 Community Supervision Officers who work directly with offenders to correct the personal and social damage caused by a criminal lifestyle. We do that by enforcing strict accountability standards and, in the process, effecting behavioral change. Our strategy is to combine accountability with opportunity, not just to tell the offender that life can be different, but to show him how he can create those differences for himself. It isn't easy: on average, an offender who reaches our supervision has been arrested six times and convicted three. He is very likely to have a history of substance abuse and less likely to have received any treatment. Chances are about even that he completed high school. Even if he did, he has few marketable job skills and a poor work history. Sadly, many of our offenders have had far too much exposure to a life on the wrong side of the law.

D.C.'s high incarceration rate has often resulted in generations of the same members of a family being in prison simultaneously. During my tenure as the Deputy Director of the District of Columbia Department of Corrections, it was not uncommon to have fathers and sons and occasionally even grandsons incarcerated in different institutions at the Lorton Correctional Complex. Even more common were large numbers of Lorton inmates who had grown up together and attended the same schools. Over the years, a stint at Lorton became sort of a right of passage within some of the city's more economically depressed neighborhoods.

Too many of the District's youth have had no personal experience of a man who works every day at Giant Food or the post office, pays his bills, takes care of his family and gets true satisfaction from simply doing the right thing. Too few of these adolescents have had the benefit of a coach, a teacher, a minister, or neighbor who touches their lives by example.

One young man, a participant in our faith-based mentoring program, told me recently that he just never had anyone in his life to show him the right way. Many of our offenders never learned the discipline required to work by holding a summer job. They never participated in a youth sports program to expose them to leadership, team work, and fair play. Instead, they hung out on the streets, their fathers were often absent, their mothers overwhelmed, and the public institutions that were supposed to look out for their welfare were crippled by lack of resources.

The great scholar of American democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville, believed that our society's strength lay in its defense not of particular rules but of the individual's right to define his own community. Tocqueville wrote, "A democratic country's knowledge of how people combine is the mother of all forms of knowledge; on its progress depends that of all others." each community defines its own norms through the groups into which citizens divide themselves—the family, congregations, political parties, clubs, etc. The result of this free association is not only the individual's investment in his community's success, but the community's careful nurturing of its individual members. But free association is not always positive association. In so many cases, our young men see no legitimate role for themselves in the mainstream community, have developed their own communities or their own antisocial norms or standards of behavior. Membership in these clubs is very costly not just to the youth who join them, but to all of us. The individual surrenders his hopes, his dreams, and often his liberty. He ends up incarcerated or on CSOSA's case load. Society pays in fear, mistrust and the social and material consequences of crime.

CSOSA's approach to supervision requires that the offender disassociate from a negative community that may have led him into trouble. At the same time, we attempt to establish new bonds between the offender and positive social institutions. We do this in two ways: by enforcing accountability, which reduces the risk to reoffend, and by introducing the offender to people and institutions who contribute to this city's well-being rather than detract from it. Our Community Supervision Officers work directly with residents, employers and educational and faith institutions, inviting them to embrace the offenders among them and give them a hand in rejoin-

ing society. It may be charity, but it is also good public safety practice.

The more invested the community is in an individual, the more obstacles are going to be put between that individual and self-destruction. Many of us grew up in neighborhoods where everyone knew whose child we were, and every one of our neighbors would tell a parent if they saw us doing something wrong. CSOSA's vision isn't that different. Over the past 18 months we have matched over 100 returning offenders with mentors from this city's faith institutions. The mentors are often older, retired men and women who want to give of themselves. One mentor is a school custodian who has raised five children. When he was asked why he chose to become a mentor, he answered, "I guess I know something about helping young men avoid prison. All of my boys are doing well. I'd like to help a few other boys do well, as well." Mentors can provide the guidance and tough love many of our offenders have never known. They help to develop the empathy that our offenders never had. We are grateful to them and for them.

Criminal supervision is rarely a lifelong relationship. Within a few months or a few years, the offender no longer has to answer to us. It is our fervent hope that by the time his supervision ends, he will have learned that he always has to answer to the community. For the most part, CSOSA supervision is effective at safeguarding the public. Of all the arrests in Washington last year, only about 13 percent involved offenders under our supervision. But as you know, most crime is committed by individuals known to the system that are not under supervision. For that reason, we try to involve the community and the offender's success so that accountability remains long after we are out of the picture.

I wish CSOSA supervised only a few hundred individuals, because only a few hundred individuals needed supervision. But until many things change, the criminal justice system will remain too big a part of the lives of this city's black men and boys. The very least we can do for them is to recognize that unless we connect them to the community, the criminal justice system will be the only community that they know.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you and to offer this testimony to you today. Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much as well.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Quander follows:]

STATEMENT

OF

PAUL A. QUANDER, JR.
DIRECTOR
COURT SERVICES AND OFFENDER SUPERVISION AGENCY
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BEFORE THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

HEARING ON

"THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND HELATH-RELATED PROBLEMS
OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN AND BOYS
IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA"

SEPTEMBER 12, 2003

Congressman Davis, Congressman Waxman, Congresswoman Norton and Members of the Committee:

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important topic, which is of vital interest to me as a citizen, a father, a public servant, and an African American.

I am Paul A. Quander, Jr., Director of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia (CSOSA). As you know, CSOSA is a relatively new federal agency that was established in 1997 under the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act. Our function is to provide community supervision of individuals on pretrial detention, probation, parole, and supervised release. Our mission is to reduce recidivism and protect the public through effective supervision practices.

CSOSA provided supervision to over 20,000 individuals last year. Some were probationers convicted of a misdemeanor and sentenced to a few months. Some were parolees returning to the community after a period of incarceration Almost all—over 94 percent—were African American.

We cannot speak of the difficulties facing African American men and boys in this city without speaking of the criminal justice system. The Washington Post reported in 1997 that nearly half of the city's black men between 18 and 50 were either involved with, or being pursued by, the criminal justice system.[1] Nationally, the rate of involvement is about one-third. So the District of Columbia, which has by far the highest incarceration rate in the country,[2] has an even higher rate of incarcerating black men. Among the problems young black men face in our city, that is surely one of the most significant. It is far more likely today that a black male student in the District of Columbia public schools will graduate to prison than it is that he will graduate from college.

Most of us here today have heard these statistics before. In my former job, I contributed to them. During my eight years at the U.S. Attorney's Office, I prosecuted and gained conviction of many African American defendants. Although I believed that doing the time was a just and logical consequence of doing the crime, I knew incarceration damaged the lives of

[1] Cheryl Thompson, "Washington D.C., Young Blacks Entangled in Legal System," *Washington Post*, August 26, 1997, p. B1

[2] According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, in 2001, Louisiana had the highest incarceration rate in the nation at 822 persons per 100,000 population. The District of Columbia's incarceration rate in 2000, the last year during which the city operated its own prison system, was 1,264 per 100,000, or approximately 50 percent higher.

individuals and the families they left behind. At CSOSA, I lead a workforce of more than 300 Community Supervision Officers who work directly with offenders to correct the personal and social damage caused by a criminal lifestyle. We do that by enforcing strict accountability standards and, in the process, effecting behavioral change. Our strategy is to combine accountability with opportunity—not just to tell the offender that life can be different, but to show him how he can create those differences for himself.

It isn't easy. On average, an offender who reaches our supervision has been arrested six times and convicted three. He is very likely to have a history of drug abuse and much less likely to have received any treatment. Chances are about even that he completed high school. Even if he did, he has few marketable job skills and a poor work history.

Sadly, many of our offenders have had far too much exposure to a life on the wrong side of the law. DC's high incarceration rate has often resulted in generations of the same family being incarcerated simultaneously. During my tenure as Deputy Director of the D.C. Department of Corrections it was not uncommon to have fathers and sons, and occasionally even grandsons, incarcerated in different institutions at the Lorton Correctional Complex. Even more common were large numbers of Lorton inmates who had grown up together in the same neighborhood and attended the same elementary, junior high and high schools. Over the years, a stint at Lorton became a sort of rite of passage for young men unfortunate enough to grow up in some of the city's more economically depressed communities, lacking both positive role models to show them the right path and resources to help them follow it.

Too many of the District's youth have had no personal experience of a man who gets up and goes to work every day at Giant Food or the post office, pays his bills, takes care of his family and gets true satisfaction from simply doing the right thing every day. Too few have had the benefit of a coach, a teacher, a minister or a neighbor who touches their lives by example. I remember one young man, a participant in our faith-based mentoring program, who said that he "just never had anyone in his life to show him right way." Many of our offenders as teenagers never held a summer job to introduce them to the discipline required for work or participated in a youth sports program to expose them to leadership, teamwork and fair play. Their fathers are often absent; their mothers, overwhelmed, and the public institutions that are supposed to look out for their welfare, crippled by lack of resources.

The great scholar of American democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville, believed that our society's strength lay in its defense not of particular rules, but of the individual's right to define his own rules by defining his community. Tocqueville wrote: "In democratic countries knowledge of how [people] combine is the mother of all other forms of knowledge; on its progress depends that of all the others." Each community defines its own norms through the groups into which citizens divide themselves—families, congregations, political parties, clubs, etc. The result of this free association is not only the individual's investment in his community's success, but the community's careful nurturing of its individual members.

Freedom of association does not guarantee that the association will be positive or beneficial. In so many cases, our young men, seeing no legitimate role for themselves in the mainstream community, have developed their own communities with their own antisocial norms and standards of behavior. Membership in these clubs is very costly—not just to the young men who join them, but to all of us. The individual surrenders his hopes, his dreams, and often his liberty; he ends up incarcerated or on CSOSA's caseload. Society pays in fear, mistrust, and the social and material social consequences of crime.

CSOSA's approach to supervision requires that the offender disassociate from the negative community that may have led him into trouble. At the same time, we attempt to establish new bonds between the offender and positive social institutions. We do this in two ways: by enforcing accountability, which reduces the risk of reoffense, and by introducing the offender to positive associations—the folk who contribute to this city's well being, rather than detract from it. Our community supervision officers work directly with residents, employers, and educational and faith institutions, inviting them to embrace the offenders among them and give them a hand in reintegrating into society. That may be charity, but it's also good public safety practice. The more invested the community is in an individual, the more obstacles it's going to put between that individual and self-destruction. Rebuilding the relationship between the offender and the community is the essence of successful re-entry programming.

Many of us grew up in neighborhoods where everybody knew whose child we were, and every one of our neighbors would tell our parents if they saw us doing something wrong. CSOSA's vision is not that different. We are working to encourage the community to acknowledge and look out for the offenders, and with the offenders to recognize that the community is composed of individuals who deserve respect and safety.

Over the past 18 months, we have matched over a hundred returning offenders with mentors from the city's faith institutions. The mentors are often older, retired men and women who want to give of themselves. They have found strength in faith, and they want to share that strength. One mentor is a school custodian who has raised five children. When he was asked why he chose to become a mentor, he answered, "I guess I know something about helping young men avoid prison. All of my boys are doing well. I'd like to help a few other boys do well." Mentors like him provide the guidance and "tough love" many of our offenders have never known. They help to develop the empathy that our offenders have never had. We are grateful to them and for them.

CSOSA has received the generous support of Congress and the welcome cooperation of the District government. We can fund a significant amount of substance abuse treatment and other programming for the offenders we supervise. But criminal justice supervision is rarely a lifelong relationship. Within a few months or a few years, the offender no longer has to answer to us. It is our fervent hope that by the time his supervision ends, he will have learned that he always has to answer to the community.

For the most part, community supervision is effective at safeguarding the public. Of all the arrests in Washington last year, only about 13 percent involved offenders under CSOSA's supervision. But as you know, most crime is committed by individuals known to the system but not on supervision. It is not within our authority to watch everybody all the time. Our society is not structured to allow for that. We don't want it. But we want to be safe. For that reason, we try to involve the community in the offender's success so that the accountability remains long after we're out of the picture.

I wish CSOSA supervised only a few hundred individuals because only a few hundred needed supervision. But until many things change, the criminal justice system will remain too big a part of the lives of this city's black men and boys. The very least we can do for them is to recognize that unless we connect them to the community, the criminal justice system will be the only community they know.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Dr. Cummings, thank you for being with us.

STATEMENT OF JAY R. CUMMINGS, Ph.D., DEAN AND PROFESSOR, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY, AND CHAIR, DEMONSTRATION SCHOOLS PROJECT, NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF BLACK SCHOOL EDUCATORS

Mr. CUMMINGS. Good morning, Chairman Davis, Congresswoman Norton, and all gathered here. It is a good opportunity and a pleasure for me to provide this testimony.

Before I get into my prepared text I would like to give you a little bit of background on why I make these comments. I am 61; I have six children, four boys; I have two grandchildren; one is a male. I am responsible for the policymaking in Texas regarding the equity of 600,000 African-American students in the public school system, and I have been the president of the National Association for State Directors of Career and Technical Education. Some of the comments that I make have been congealed so I can respond to the time requirements, so I'll get to it.

The complexity of life, especially the conditions associated or linked to living with and among poverty in urban cities can be overwhelming to youths and adults. These conditions are complicated and are expanded by the cycle of poverty, discrimination, and limited educational opportunity that teach African-American males at a very young age lessons about learned hopelessness and learned helplessness.

Some of these factors are so systemic that they go——

Ms. NORTON. Would you move the mic a little closer, please.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Some of these factors are so systemic that they go unnoticed by the policy and decisionmakers when they attempt to address surface manifestations and symptoms of these lessons, since the outcry is most often triggered in an event or an action that is either unconscionable or unexpected. The tendency to create a fast solution often overshadows the need to attack the root causes with a more viable, longer-term policy practice or solution.

From the perspective of the author, developed through experience, education, and research, the Committee on Government Reform, through the Commission on Black Men and Boys, must develop effective programs and strategies that accommodate four critical factors. These factors, along with brief descriptives, are shown in the attachment figure 1, entitled "Success Factors," and they are as follows.

The first factor is preparation. In order for African-American men and boys to lead productive and wholesome lives, they must be the beneficiaries of an educational system that features quality teaching, effective schools and meaningful community support, all of which are in short supply currently. These ingredients should provide the content for the development of self-knowledge, cognitive, effective and psychomotor skills, as well as spirituality.

Empowered with these types of knowledge and skills, the African-American men and boys are prepared in the processes that guarantee excellence, equity and legitimacy. Thus, they can realize the transcendent nature of preparation as described by Orison Swett Marden, "The golden opportunity you are seeking is in your-

self. It is not in your environment, it is not in luck or chance or the help of others. It is in yourself alone."

The second factor is opportunity. In order for African-American men and boys to take advantage of the options that are available in educational institutions and the workplace, they must be guaranteed access and supplied with quality academic and cultural experiences. Educational and work environments must be adaptable to the strengths of a diverse population and demonstrate through positive attitudes and behaviors that the welcome is genuine and the environment is supportive.

Norman Vincent Peale's words are instructive for this factor, "Any fact facing us is not as important as our attitude toward it, for that determines our success or failure."

The third factor is participation. In all matters—socially, educationally, politically, and economically—African-American men and boys, through policy and practice, must be empowered to be actively involved as valued participants. It is useful to remember the words of Henry Ford at this juncture: "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success."

The final factor is growth and development. African-American men and boys must be engaged continuously so that individual and collective mastery of educational and cultural, as well as societal competencies, are expected and achieved. Napoleon Hill's quote seems prophetic for this factor: "Strength and growth come only through continuous effort and struggle."

It is my contention that these brief descriptions of the four critical factors and the achievement thereof would prove to be the necessary ingredients for an appropriate and legitimate response to the effective and successful academic and work force education of African-American men and boys. A useful example of a promising intervention is the Communities in Schools, Houston, Inc., partnership. Through an array of services and quality providers focusing on client needs that connect to the four critical factors, a sampling of the results for 2002–2003 is included; and I worked on the evaluation plan for this model.

Essentially—and I will just excerpt a few things here—about 3,194 African-American students were served by this program. On the case outcomes, they had assessments for 4,398 that showed their academic behavior and academic performance improved, their school social behavior improved 67.62 percent, and the attendance rate improved 51.02 percent. 7,077 students in this program stayed in school, which was 97.12 percent of the total population. 82.10 percent of those who stayed in school were promoted, and 17.9 percent were retained; very few of them dropped out. Eligible to graduate from this program in the first year were 415; 400 graduated, 98.36 percent. Those who aspired to post-secondary educational plans were: 104 planned to apply, 27 were admitted and 170 applied for admission and were admitted.

This is but one example of effective programming that has some useful elements for addressing the systemic barriers that prevent some African-American males and boys from becoming or continuing to be productive, prosperous and proud citizens. However, one must be careful not to lose the uniqueness of individual African-American men and boys when focusing on the collective population.

Thus, this testimony encourages the use of flexible policies, practices and solutions that can be customized according to the specific needs of the African-American male.

Just yesterday I visited one of these programs in Detroit. Cass Tech High School is lifted up as a possibility for further exploration in terms of combining work force and academic education at a very high level and opening up opportunities to African-American males through a strong partnership with the surrounding community. I spoke with a representative from the Ford Motor Co. regarding a program they had with the school yesterday.

I have also noticed these strong partnerships in Houston; at the Middle College for Technology Careers High School where they have a very strong partnership with the community that deals with telecommunications and information technology throughout the city of Houston. And it just so happens to be located on the campus of Texas Southern University.

And then in Dallas, I looked at Lincoln High School which is a magnet school and which has a strong connection to the humanities community. And they have been able through this partnership to provide the kind of environment that I speak about in these factors that allow a limited number—and I underscore "limited number"—of African-American men to gain some of these factors that I have isolated in this presentation.

Thank you very much.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Cummings follows:]

Testimony
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform
Hearing on the Commission on Black Men and Boys
Friday, September 12, 2003

The complexity of life, especially the conditions associated or linked to living with and among poverty in urban cities, can be overwhelming to youths and adults. These conditions are complicated and are expanded by the cycle of poverty, discrimination, and limited educational opportunities that teach African American males, at a very young age, lessons about learned hopelessness and learned helplessness. Some of these factors are so systemic that they go unnoticed by the policy and decision makers when they attempt to address surface manifestations and symptoms of these lessons. Since the outcry is most often triggered by an event or an action that is either unconscionable or unexpected, the tendency to create a fast solution often overshadows the need to attack the root causes with a more viable longer-termed policy, practice, or solution.

From the perspective of the author, developed through experience, education, and research, the Committee on Government Reform through the Commission on Black Men and Boys must develop effective programs or strategies that accommodate four critical factors. These factors, along with brief descriptors, are shown in Figure 1 (Success Factors) in the attached appendix, and they are as follows:

I. Preparation

In order for African American men and boys to lead productive and wholesome lives, they must be the beneficiaries of an educational system that features quality teaching, effective schools, and meaningful community support. These ingredients should provide the content for the development of self-knowledge, cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills, as well as spirituality. Empowered with these types of knowledge and skill, the African American men and boys are prepared in processes that guarantee excellence, equity, and legitimacy. Thus, they can realize the transcendent nature of preparation as described by Orison Swett Marden's quote:

> "The golden opportunity you are seeking is in yourself. It is not in your environment; it is not in luck or chance, or the help of others; it is in yourself alone."

II. Opportunity

In order for African American men and boys to take advantage of the options that are available in educational institutions and the work place, they must be guaranteed access and supplied with quality academic as well as cultural experiences. Educational and work environments must be adaptable to the strengths of a diverse population and demonstrate through positive attitudes and behaviors that the welcome is genuine, and the environment is supportive. Norman Vincent Peale's words are instructive for this factor:

> "Any fact facing us is not as important as our attitude toward it, for that determines our success or failure."

III. Participation

In all matters socially, educationally, politically, and economically, African American men and boys, through policy and practice, must be empowered to be actively involved as valued participants. It is useful to remember the words of Henry Ford at this juncture:

> "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success."

IV. Growth and Development

African American men and boys must be engaged continuously so that individual and collective mastery of education and cultural as well as societal competencies are expected and achieved. Napoleon Hill's quote seems prophetic for this factor:

> "Strength and growth come only through continuous effort and struggle...."

It is the contention of the author that these brief descriptions of the four critical factors and the achievement thereof would prove to be the necessary ingredients for an appropriate and legitimate response to the effective and successful academic and workforce education of African American males. A useful example of a promising intervention is the Communities In Schools Houston, Incorporated partnership. Through an array of services and quality providers focused on client needs that connect to the four critical factors, a sampling of the results for 2002-03 is included:

Gender	Number	Percent
Male	3,387	45.91
Female	3,991	54.09

Ethnicity	Number	Percent
Black	3,194	43.29
Hispanic	3,831	51.92
White	168	2.28
Asian	75	1.02
Other	91	1.23
Multi-Ethnic	19	.26

Case Outcomes	Number Assessed	Percent Improved
Academic	3,988	68.25
Behavior	2,847	67.62
Attendance	288	51.02

School Retention	Number	Percent	Percent Promoted	Percent Retained
Stayed in School	7,077	97.12	82.10	17.90
Dropped Out	83	1.14		
Untraceable	127	1.74		

Graduation	Number	Percent
Eligible to Graduate	415	
Traceable	400	
Graduated		96.39

College Aspirations	Number
No College Plans	29
Plans to Apply	104
Completed Admission Test	27
Admitted	170

This is but one example of effective programming that has some useful elements for addressing the systemic barriers that prevent some African American males from becoming or continuing to be productive, prosperous, and proud citizens. However, one must be careful not to lose the uniqueness of individual African American men and boys when focusing on the collective population. Thus, this testimony encourages the use of flexible policies, practices, and solutions that can be customized according to the specific needs of individual African American males.

Testimony provided by:
Jay Cummings, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education
Texas Southern University
Chair, National Alliance of
Black School Educators, Incorporated
Demonstration Schools/Communities
Initiative

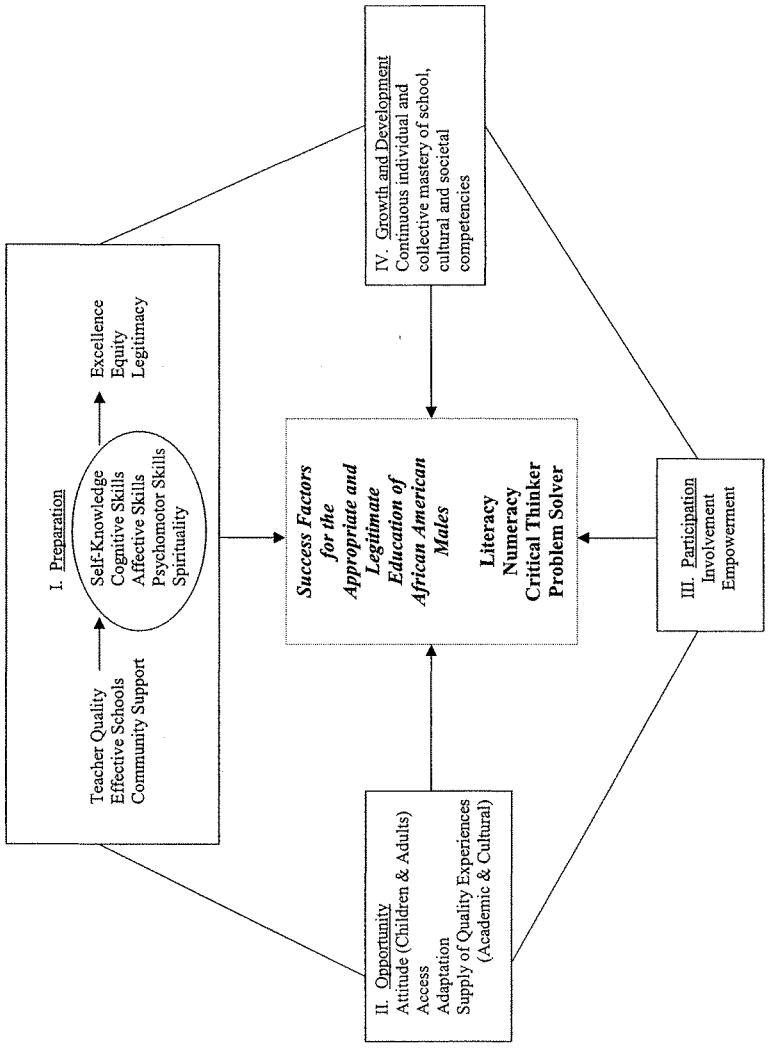

Figure 1 – Success Factors

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Ms. Gwathney, you are the clean-up speaker here. Thank you for being with us.

STATEMENT OF ROBIN GWATHNEY, PROJECT MANAGER, JOHN J. HELDRICH CENTER FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Ms. GWATHNEY. Good morning, Chairman Davis and Congresswoman Norton. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this hearing today.

I am Robin Gwathney and I am a project manager from the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, which is located at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Public Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers State University in New Jersey. The Heldrich Center is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and policy organization focused on innovative work to strengthen the work force development system. My testimony today will focus on characteristics of effective One-Stop Centers and services for youth.

As you know, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 transformed the work force development system to a customer-focused system that provides job seekers with centralized services delivered through One-Stop Career Centers. WIA is supposed to be a major step toward a work force development system that merges numerous agencies and nonprofits, government and business, education and training programs into an efficient and effective system that is capable of providing high-quality career development and employment assistance.

During the act's first full year of implementation, the Heldrich Center was asked by the U.S. DOL/ETA, to seek out the One-Stop Centers operating on the WIA, seek out those that were performing well or maintaining innovative practices, and to document the success stories and share that information within the work force development system.

We also participated with the Jobs for the Future initiative, similar to the One-Stop Career Center design, but focused on youth councils and youth service designs. With the One-Stop innovations initiative, we visited 25 sites across the country and we gathered information to share with the work force development community; and there were several themes or major characteristics that surfaced that each, or most, of these centers maintain.

Service integration was key: those centers, that were able to integrate services seamlessly and provide one point-of-entry contact so that the customer or client walking in was indifferent to who was providing services to them, were successful. An example of that is Detroit's Workplace, where they offer a host of services besides the core services required by the mandate. They offer services that include residential services; they have a parenting center onsite; they have services for child and adult development.

Another characteristic of a successful One-Stop placed emphasis on serving a universal job-seeker and employer population, which drove a re-engineering of the entire approach to providing work force services. Several areas developed tools for providing cutting-edge information and tools to clients. An example of this can be found by the Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board, which is located in Victoria, TX. They have a concierge-like setup where folks are—when clients come in, they are provided hands-on

assistance throughout the system, and pretty much all their problems and issues can be addressed at the center.

In Baltimore, we found Baltimore to be—Baltimore Youth Council, actually, to be an example, a great example, of how leadership and collaboration work to the benefit of or the intent to which it was designed. In Baltimore, they have the commitment of the mayor and local CBOs, community-based organizations, and other major youth development organizations to design and provide a youth service design that has merit or provides impact to the youth that it serves.

One of the characteristics, or notable characteristics, that the youth council employs is that to be a part of the youth council, you can't miss more than one or two meetings, and, if you do, you're asked to vacate your seat. But also, those folks participating or agreeing to participate on youth council, bring all of the resources kept in the respective organizations whole to the table to share with the other folks that are participating in the youth council or the youth council system.

So in closing, I would say that there is no one model of success for work force development, for One-Stop Centers or youth services design; that there is a myriad of various models or designs out there; and that our research supports that WIAs are a locally-driven program and that the vision of change, is impacted by the politics and the local culture and heritage and bureaucracy significant to the locale. So, that being said, I thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Well, thank you very much. You added an important perspective as well.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Gwathney follows:]

Testimony of Robin Gwathney
Project Manager
John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development
Full Committee Hearing on "Black Men and Boys in the District of Columbia and their Impact on the Future of the Black Family"
September 12, 2003

Chairman Davis, Ranking Member Waxman and members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this hearing. I am Robin Gwathney, Project Manager at the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development located at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. The Heldrich Center is a non-profit, non-partisan research and policy organization focused on innovative research that strengthens workforce policy, education, and placement and training programs.

In my testimony today, I want to focus on the characteristics of effective one-stop centers and service designs for youth.

As you are well aware, the Workforce Investment Act enacted in 1998 seeks to spur the development of a customer-focused workforce system that provides job seekers with centralized services delivered through One-Stop Career Centers and their partners. The WIA is a major step toward a workforce development system that merges a myriad of agencies, nonprofits, government, and business education and training programs into an efficient and effective system that is capable of providing high quality career development and employment assistance.

During the Act's first year of full program implementation, the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration asked the John J. Heldrich Center at Rutgers University to identify, document, and disseminate information on innovative and promising practices supporting One-Stop Career Center systems operating under the Workforce Investment Act. Additionally, the Heldrich Center, in partnership with Jobs for the Future, conducted ten site visits to local youth programs to identify promising practices in youth service delivery, ascertain the

progress communities are making and identify the challenges they face in establishing comprehensive systems for serving youth. The full report can be viewed online at www.jff.org.

The Heldrich Center staff and consultants visited 25 sites across the country to gather information on positive and innovative developments within the emerging One-Stop Career Center system for the purpose of sharing this information with the entire workforce development community. WIA One-Stop Career Centers can succeed in a variety of different ways – there is no single model for success. However, six crosscutting themes emerged from our research. They include: integrating programs and services; providing universal access, empowering individuals, sectoral strategies; incorporation of information technology; and one-stop effectiveness measures.

A number of One-Stop Career Centers have gone beyond what the law requires – merely locating agencies and programs in the same facility – and achieved an exceptional degree of service integration. Some features of this integration include forging a single, common identity that is projected to all customers and organizing services by function, not agency affiliation or program funding.

At Detroit's Workplace, customers are offered through participating partners the standard core services and career guidance. The Workplace also houses a parenting center, provides child and family development services, and legal, health and residential services. Essentially, a customer can have most, if not all, of critical work supports met the One-Stop.

In many areas of the country, WIA's emphasis on serving a universal job seeker and employer population has driven a re-engineering of the entire approach to providing workforce services. Several areas have developed model practices for giving job seekers cutting-edge information and tools so that they can make informed choices about their careers. The *Golden Crescent Workforce Development Board (Victoria,*

TX) provides personal assistance and concierge-like service to customers as they explore career paths and select training courses and institutions. Customers must appear before a review committee and defend their choices. Review committee members believe that it encourages those who are sincere and want the training, while boosting the self-confidence of the customer. In addition, the Board provides customers with Individual Training Account (ITA) similar to a checking account at a bank, to be drawn upon for training. On a periodic basis, the customer is provided with an itemized statement that shows the remaining balance of the ITA.

At the same time that One-Stop systems are working to provide quality universal services, they are experimenting with addressing the needs of segments of the local workforce or workplace community. The *FutureWorks Career Center (Springfield. MA)* developed a "Working English" program that incorporates the cultural needs of Hispanic job seekers and helps them get a foot in the door and gain an understanding of what is expected during employment interviews and on the job. The benefit of this program is not exclusive the customers. *FutureWorks* learned that a *complete* survey of the needs of a specific community yields better program design and that the cultural needs of customers need to be considered.

Almost all the one-stops profiled in our research have worldwide web sites. A number of sites have used computer technology to assist with direct customer service. The *North Central Texas Workforce Center* in *Denton (TX)* equipped several computers in its Resource Room with self-paced MS-Office and Windows tutorials. While Both *Worksystems Inc (Portland, OR)* (www.worksystems.org) and NOVA (Sunnyvale, CA) (www.novapic.org) have on-line customer feedback mechanisms on their web sites that function much like on-line suggestion boxes.

The Baltimore City Youth Council provides a powerful example of the difference that collaboration and good leadership can make. Youth development services receive substantial support from the mayor and major community based organizations. To serve on the youth council, members must not miss more than two meetings

without sending a representative or must vacate their seat. Also, members must be willing to bring their respective organizational resources to share at the table. Additionally, the Youth Council through Baltimore's Youth Practitioner Institute recognizes that staff capacity building is essential to preparing staff for the rigors of youth development work. All of the Service Providers staff are cross-trained and are able to make referrals between adult and youth services.

I'd like to close noting that our research supports that that WIA is predominantly a locally-driven system – each promising initiative was responding to, and driven by, the environment surrounding it – political, business, historic and bureaucratic. However, change requires vision and sustained commitment by local and state partners. I appreciate the interest of this Subcommittee and am prepared to respond to any questions you may have.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Before we start the questions, Ms. Norton, do you want to recognize some visitors we have here with us?

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very, very kindly, Mr. Chairman.

I note that another of the commissioners has come in: Mr. Raheem Jenkins, a very active member of the Commission. If he'd stand.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much for being with us.

Ms. NORTON. And we have some visitors who come at a time when—in the real sense he was talking about them, although I'm sure they're simply here as part of my D.C. Students in the Capitol Program, where I try to get every young person in the District of Columbia before they come here to come to the Capitol.

So I'd like to welcome students from the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School. This is a school which has 222 students, 220 students from kindergarten then through fifth grade, and now they're about to incorporate into the sixth grade.

And if I might just read what we are discussing here today, one part of what their brochure says—and it's called "Our Parents"—parents who choose the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Charter School for their children permit active involvement in their children's education into helping fulfill the mission of the school.

I want to thank this—the Stokes Freedom Public Charter School for your work and our city particularly for that ingredient of your program.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Ms. Norton, thank you, you know, Ms. Norton and I had a knock-down, drag-out earlier this week on the voucher system for the city, but where there are public schools, vouchers, whatever, nothing replaces parental involvement in kids' education. I think that I hear that coming from everybody here today: it starts at home.

In some cases, unfortunately, you don't have that opportunity. I was one of the lucky ones. My father was in and out of my life, but I had a very strong mother, and she knew that education was critical, and, you know, she looked over me to make sure I studied hard, and I could be anything I wanted to do, so I was very fortunate.

We have a lot of single-parent families who are succeeding, and we have some with foster parents who are succeeding because they are instilling hope in their kids, but we have many who aren't, and, of course, even if you have two strong parents, nothing assures anything. I know some of the best parents whose kids have gone astray. It's tough, but I can imagine being African-American in an urban area, when employment prospects are bleak, where hope doesn't seem to reign, how difficult that is.

The hardest thing for me, and Ms. Norton and I have had a lot of discussions about this, as a white guy from the suburbs, I represent the weathiest district in the country, but we're just outside of Washington, 10 miles away from some of the people here who we don't think—who don't have the same opportunities. How do we bridge that gap? Our unemployment rate in Fairfax is under 3 percent. Not to say we don't have some economic problems; we have tons of immigrants moving in, taking jobs, moving up just right

across the river. Our kids who come out of the womb have the same opportunities. In many cases they have the same talents that we have, but they just never develop.

We saw this with the Lorton prison. We were able to close Lorton not just because it was in Virginia and my constituents didn't like it, but because they weren't getting job training and education there, and they were coming out worse than when they started. And we put them in a Federal system where they can get—in many cases get an education, get their GED, learn a trade, and come out and start their lives again. They dig a little hole for themselves there, but they can climb out of it with appropriate training.

Again, Ms. Norton and I worked together on this VCES scholarship bill that allows D.C. students to pay in-state tuition at Virginia and Maryland universities, giving some kind of hope that college is at least affordable for them, or more affordable than it was before. But public policy is complex; we don't always know what works and that's why we had our knockdown on vouchers and some other issues that we go with. We want the same thing. Each of your testimony touched me, and it gives me a little bit of a different perspective because we're dealing with kids in an environment that a lot of Members don't see every day and, therefore, we don't have to pay attention to it as part of our political constituencies. And yet it's right here in the Nation's Capital, and it's around the country, and it's our future, and we can't have a society in which one side is growing and prospering and the other seems to have no prospects at all.

Let me say to the kids from the charter school here, we have a very distinguished panel here talking about the current situation for black men and boys in the District of Columbia and around the country. Two are former Redskins, George Starke and Charles Mann are here, and some others are very learned professors who are the tops in their field around the country, and we're all looking for answers.

I've got a few questions before I hand it over to Ms. Norton. Let me start with Charles Mann. Charles, you talked about the role that Jesus Christ has played in your life and in other lives, and a lot of athletes, you see it when they score a touchdown, or it's a major part of motivating them. Talk about the role of the Church and how in some ways that can help and in some ways it's fading in urban areas as well. And if you could give us a little perspective on that.

Mr. MANN. I think, first of all, you know, most black families are rooted in spirituality, and they—because of slave days and that was the only hope we had. Our mothers a lot of times were rooted and grounded.

Let me just side-bar here for a second. I have a brother who—I'm from a family of seven. I'm the second to the youngest. I have a brother who is incarcerated right here in Virginia. He moved from California, that's where I'm originally from, and fell on hard times and went right into the system. His son is also in the system, in California, so this touches me very close, so I know. Yet we had both a mother and a father raise us. My father did die of cancer at 46 years old. I was 20 years old at the time when he passed,

but, you know—so everything we're talking about today really touches me, and it hits right at home.

And my brother who is incarcerated just moved to a medium-security prison in—somewhere in the Richmond area, has found his way. And prison, if I can say this, has been a good thing for him. If he had been outside, he would have been dead. But now he has found his way, and he has found it because of strategically sending men in there to speak into his life, and then we had his undivided attention for the first time, and he has found his way because he now loves the Lord.

And it—those athletes that you see giving it up to the Lord and, you know, kneeling and saying a quick prayer, just because you say you follow the Lord Jesus Christ doesn't mean—if you're an apple tree, there's got to be apples on the tree, you have to produce fruit. And a lot of people, it's cool right now to say you're Christian. It's cool to give it up for the Lord and go down on your knee when you score a touchdown. Those men aren't necessarily believing and following the same God that I am.

What we need to do and how I've been trained is you first—once you've made a commitment to the Lord, then you get under somebody. Paul had a Timothy in the Bible, and he trained that young man, and he developed him. So you need discipleship, and that's what the Good Samaritan Foundation is doing with our children. We're discipling them. We're growing them up in the truth and the knowledge of what Jesus Christ means in their lives and how to live out this life, a life where the world says you should do it one way, and we're saying, no, the Bible says this is the way. And so it's contrary.

Let me just give a Scripture, and then I'll be quiet. Scripture—one of the first scriptures I learned when I came to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ was found in Romans 12, 1 and 2. The King James version says, "And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is a good, acceptable and perfect world of God and be not conformed to this world." Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is a good, acceptable and perfect world of God.

The world has it saying it one way, and the Lord is saying it totally different. A lot of times we need to find our way, and if we can find an older gentleman to bring us up, and then, as we get brought up, we can find a younger kid for us to bring up, then we got something going. And I've got people speaking into my life, and I'm speaking into other men's lives, young men that I'm trying to train, and that, to me, is so much more important than all this other stuff.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. The government has a role, but there's some things the government can't do.

Mr. MANN. They can provide opportunities.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. That's right.

Mr. MANN. Provide opportunities. And Joe Gibbs, Joe Gibbs was great at this. A lot of people don't know Joe Gibbs loved the Lord, and he allowed men to share their faith, and he encouraged it, and a lot of times he got in trouble keeping Christians on the team longer than he should have. I probably got an extra year or two,

because he knew it wasn't about having the greatest athlete on the team. It wasn't the guy who had all the talent. It was men of integrity coming together. 1991, this Super Bowl ring that I'm wearing, we didn't have the greatest team, but we had a lot of guys that played together. It wasn't about them. It was about the team. That didn't come because they were great athletes. It came because he had a bunch of core men that loved the Lord that found a way to work in a community.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Ms. Gwathney, let me ask you: you made an interesting observation, about the successful program that you observed here locally, and one of the things we've wrestled with here is, if compassion and dollars could have solved our problems, we would have solved them a long time ago. Public policy is—what works one place may not work someplace else, and a lot of it does depend on leadership, cooperation, a lot of things, teamwork, and if you don't get it everywhere, these very broad programs we put out, sometimes they lose it as they move down and get administered in different areas.

That's not to say we shouldn't be using Federal resources, it's just a question of how can we use them best. Can we get them down to the community where they can be used and coordinated and evaluated? The Federal system is one where we learn by these laboratories of democracy in cities and States where they build successful programs. The successful programs I've seen are ones that target a school, a community, a family, an individual, as opposed to the broad-brush approach which doesn't seem to reach the same way. But do you see it the same way, or do you have a little bit different view on that?

Ms. GWATHNEY. You know, our research, as we're out and about, pretty much the leadership is key. There has to be a vision and a willingness of folks to come to the table and, as the folks in Baltimore say, put your egos at the door, and regardless of the program that you represent or the funding stream, that you're willing to put or pool your resources to achieve the same goal.

And so we're—there has been success in that instance. Folks have done that. They've been able to put aside politics, if you will, or—or the need to be right or first and recognize that there is an opportunity here for us to do something great, to have an impact, and then go about the business of figuring out how to do that so that it's a win-win game for everyone as opposed to someone gaining more benefit or more notoriety than the other.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Dr. Wilson, one thing I've gotten out of your testimony is—and I think it's very insightful—the decreased demand for low-skill labor. If you don't have an education or a skill set, with the way the global economy is going today, you're pretty much out of luck, and that puts education and job training at a premium, more than anything else. From your perspective, what programs work? What could we be doing more here that we're not doing now; I mean, toward that end?

Mr. WILSON. One thing I think that's very, very important, and I would consider you might think of it as a short-term solution, but it might have long-term consequences, positive consequences, and that is trying to improve the school-to-work transition. I mean, that is a terrible problem. In my larger paper I talked about the fact

that a lot of black kids in the inner city graduate from high school in June. By October a small percentage, a fraction of them, actually have jobs, and that's related to the problem of school-to-work transition. And I think that we should really focus on creating apprenticeship programs and internships for these young people in cities like Washington, DC, that would facilitate and ease their transition into employment.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. OK. And the problem now we see is jobs moving out of the city; plentiful sometimes in suburban areas, or so-called edge cities. We tend to get caught up in egos and not jurisdictions, and I think, Ms. Norton, this is a tremendous opportunity for our jurisdiction to work closer on these kind of issues for opportunities on that.

Mr. Starke, let me ask you a question. Role models are just critical with what you've—you know, in your experience. Can you talk a little bit more about that? I think the role model, if it's not in the home, you're looking on the street, you can look to the media. What can we do to find better role models and reach out? I know you've been working on this for some time, but you can't do it in the large scale. You almost have to do it a little at a time. Can you talk about that?

Mr. STARKE. Well, Charles mentioned it himself. There are organizations. You know, the Commission, one of the obligations of the Commission on Black Men and Boys was to identify and sort of coordinate other programs under one umbrella. You know what I do. I do education, technical stuff. It turns out that when you look seriously and closely to the neighborhoods, there are groups like Charles', and they are meant to ship groups all over the city. And so I think that the people are there. I think the emotion's there. I don't think the government can have a whole lot of impact on this. I don't think that money would have helped us; maybe somewhat. It's mostly a community thing with the groups and the caring.

Like I said, I believe they're there. We've run across a lot of it as part of our research on the Commission, so we're trying to coordinate them and hook them up, when you've got guys who are retired on one hand, and they're not sure where to go, and a lot of it's coordination. But you're right, Tom, the mentoring and the one-on-one stuff happens on a community level with small groups and individuals, and that seems to be there. You know, it's how you take that love, really, and put it with education and technical training and school-to-work and all that other stuff.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you. I would just say to Charles Mann: my father did serve a couple tours in the prison system in Virginia, so I've had acquaintance with that, but I had a very strong mother, and that makes all the difference in the world. It keeps me straight. In some ways, I think my father was a wonderful man, but was a negative role model in terms of what you shouldn't become and what you could become if you didn't watch things. But I appreciate your testimony and your story. I think all of this is very helpful to us. Thank you. Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Well, first, let me comment on the quality of the testimony: it's been extraordinary testimony. Each and every one of you have provided me with insights or information that I cer-

tainly did not have before, and I want to begin by just thanking you for that.

I'd like to, perhaps, ask a question, and the first question may involve Mr. Starke, Mr. Mann, and Dr. Wilson, because, in essence, it seems clear that this is so complicated that one has to put together a set of ingredients in order to begin to grapple with the complicated issues that are before us.

Dr. Wilson is a world-class researcher. His work in the field and his theoretical work is unique in how he has uncovered these issues, issues involving black people, but especially black men, and his writings have been the best work in the field, and we are so pleased that you are able to be here. But you have noticed that Dr. Wilson did not confine his testimony entirely to jobs, although that is—and I agree with him—central to everything. A man without money and without a job will find money. Having money to do whatever you want to do is associated with manhood in the world and not just in our country, so if you don't find it through the legitimate economy, we now know you will find it, and we just have to face that.

I appreciate what Mr. Mann said about faith, but he also told the truth, that these youngsters come from homes with strong faith traditions. That's been the tradition of our community, even during slavery, where they embrace the faith of slave masters who believed we weren't equal. We are faith-based people, and yet these same children coming from homes where they have Jesus spoken to them every day are out in the street shooting people. So I appreciate what you say about athletes getting on their knees. And, of course, we read about some of them engaging in sexual abuse, or even taking guns, going in the street as if they didn't have millions of dollars in the first place. This is very, very complicated, and it does go to opportunity, but it also goes to cultural matters.

Dr. Wilson talked about apprenticeship, school, of work. This is an example—and Dr. Cummings' work, these are examples of short-term things that can matter. I'm on another committee that has to do with Federal construction and renovation in the District of Columbia. That's the granddaddy of contractors, and I've been able to get the GSA to agree that there will be a certified apprenticeship program whenever they build anything or renovate anything in the District of Columbia. And what that means, for example, is that if you build the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, you have to have a certified apprenticeship program so that the next time there's a construction job, you can be certified as to how much you can do. These are the kind of decent-paying jobs that black men used to be able to get, at least when we began to integrate the crafts that have not been available, because for 25 years now there's not been those kinds of federally supported apprenticeship programs.

I want to ask, initially, Mr. Starke, Mr. Mann, and Dr. Wilson about how to penetrate so that we can get toward the point where jobs, legitimate jobs, are what the average young black men believes he can get and should seek. And before we get to schools and the absence of education, which accounts for so much of this, Dr. Wilson testified to something that the Commission on Black Men and Boys and certainly the people at this table—and we begin with

what Dr. Starke and Mr. Mann have seen firsthand. And he talked about a kind of vicious cycle of attitudes where you bring these harsh attitudes out of your condition in the ghetto, and then, of course, in the workplace, they turn people off, so they know they don't want you there, which then turns you off more, and you become further estranged from the possibility of work.

Now, I want to ask whether Mr. Starke in his program, Mr. Mann in his program, have found youngsters coming with these attitudes and how you break through them. And I want to ask Dr. Wilson if he believes that those attitudes are capable of being met through programs, whether we have to go to the churches—but if this is the predicate, the very attitude you bring to a job, which is what you need to live, and that attitude almost disqualifies you from moving forward into legitimate work, my first question is a very hard one, I recognize, but whether you've had any experience dealing with that problem, with overcoming that problem, and whether you think there's any role for any sector to play. That would, I suppose, go to all of you, including Dr. Wilson, in dealing with that threshold concern.

Mr. STARKE. Let me go first, if you don't mind.

The attitude problem, of course, like you said, it's a—nothing is ever simple, but I think that a lot of that attitude which turns off the employee is really fear; you know, fear of rejection. And so people build their own failure, and we see it all the time. And, you know, we have graduates who can do it, who are technically capable of getting a good job in the automobile business field, and they'll go out and dress like an idiot, and you'll bring him back and say, what are you doing? You know you can't go in. God doesn't know you from Adam. You've graduated from school, you've taken all your tests, you've studied like heck, and then you dress like a fool, and you get rejected. That's just a person that has fear. He's built his failure into that because he's never been successful before, and he doesn't realize that he has the tools to do it.

You know, that's like years ago, you know, people didn't want to act white and go to school, and what was—once again, how silly is that? That's building in a failure rate. You're just afraid. You're afraid because you don't know anybody who's been successful, and your own self-esteem is such that you don't want to be rejected again, so you build failure in. Simply enough, to overcome that, you have to work for us. That's a counseling issue and we get that.

Ms. NORTON. But you have found young people entering with that, and you've been able to deal with that fear?

Mr. STARKE. We see that every day, but you can deal with that.

Ms. NORTON. Or, I suppose, if I might say so, learning what few of us know how to do, fix automobiles, may chase a lot of fear from you.

Mr. STARKE. Well, sure, you would think it would, and for most people it does, but in the back of your mind, however, you know, if you've never had—we had a graduation, quickly, a couple months ago, and it was something I probably might have done. My principal said to me, "Look, George, a lot of these people graduating from your school have never completed anything in their whole life before." They started and dropped out, they started and dropped out, and they don't fundamentally believe that they can be success-

ful. You've given them things along the way to say, look, you can do this, and we get through it. So the logic doesn't—you know, it's disconnected from me. I'm thinking of a gal who spent so much time in school, who graduated, would automatically feel at equal with other people who have worked for us, but that's not necessarily true. That's just a counseling issue.

Mr. MANN. For our program we take kids 14 years to 18, so we get a child who comes in as a freshman in high school. They've already been told they can't succeed. They've already—we get them at a tough age, but the first thing they start doing with them, and the way we win them over when they come in with those attitudes is, we love on them and we love on them a lot. We do a lot of fun things. People in the community will send us, you know, tickets to Orioles games. We'll take them here, take them there. We really act as parents, if you will, foster parents, to these kids, and initially they're hard, they have hard exteriors, especially the men and the boys, but we love one another.

I brought a group of seniors to my home. They went swimming. They hung out. We barbecued and everything. These kids are like, "You are an untouchable. We saw you on TV. You did all these great things, and I'm up in your space and your house and with your three children and with your wife." And so we welcome them into our home, we love on them like you wouldn't believe, and love, it really works. It really does. It's not fake, it's not phony. No cameras, nobody's seeing us doing this stuff, but it's important.

And so we love on these kids like they hadn't been loved on before. We tell them they're special, and then we show it in our actions, and then all those exteriors start breaking down, and then we've got them. And once we've got them—we just graduated—we had 22 seniors in our program this year. Sixteen of them graduated and went on to 4-year institutions. We had the valedictorian of Anacostia High School in our program. He turned down a 4-year scholarship to GW. The first time George Washington University's ever given a scholarship offer to a kid at Anacostia, and Anacostia used to be all white. First time ever, this kid got it, he turned it down because he went to Stanford. That's what we're producing in our program because we're loving on these kids.

Ms. NORTON. Dr. Wilson, as you answer this, I remind you that, you know, you are such a truth-teller. You even said in your testimony that black men are having difficulty getting even menial jobs.

Mr. WILSON. Yes, because the menial jobs that are available tend to be in the service sector and black men are competing with the growing number of immigrants and women who have entered the labor market, and the employers have the perception that these other workers, the immigrants and women, are more acceptable than the black men.

And let me say that this attitude toward black men, I think, sort of grew out of the response—the way in which black men have responded to the declining employment opportunities over time, and as they've become—experienced greater joblessness, they've turned to crime, things like this, which reinforces this image.

Let me just say something. I think the attitude problem is important, but it has to be put in proper context. If the attitude issue was so overwhelming, black men would not respond to expanding

opportunities. And let's just take the late 1990's and the year 2000. The economic boom had an incredible positive effect on black men; not only black men, but all low-skilled workers. I'm talking about low-skilled workers now.

Black men were working more. This is based on systematic research. In the late 1990's, they were working more. Black men ages 16 to 34 were working more, earning higher wages, and committing far fewer crimes than in the early 1990's. And you're talking—what we're talking about now are not educated black men. We're talking about black men with a high school education or less, many of them with prison records. They were finding jobs because employers were looking for workers instead of workers looking for employers. Some employers actually were so hard-pressed that they were no longer using the drug test because they needed workers, you see.

So black men do respond to expanding opportunities, and if we could have continued that economic boom period for several decades, the boom period of the late 1990's, you would have seen some remarkable changes in many of these inner-city neighborhoods that we're concerned about.

Having said that, however, it's unlikely that we're going to come back to that boom period in the near future, and so the question is: Are there programs that would deal with some of these attitude problems that grow out of disappointment and—that would deal with these attitude problems effectively? Yes, there are, and there have been such programs, and they have also been researched very carefully by organizations like the Manpower Demonstration Research Corp. [MDRC]. And I'm talking about programs like progress—Project Quest in San Antonio and Strive. These programs provide skilled training, hard skills and soft skills. And with soft skills you're dealing with this attitudinal problem, the way that these young people present themselves.

These programs have proven to be effective, but let me just say this: These programs deal with what we call supply side matters, not the demand side. The demand side is when you create a demand for employment. Supply-side is when you provide the education and training for these people. Supply side programs are not very effective—I shouldn't—let me rephrase that. It's more difficult to have effective supply side programs in a dismal economy, you know? People say, "Well, why am I going through this when there are no jobs available?" So I just want to underline that point.

But, Congresswoman Norton, can I—Congresswoman Norton, may I just make one other point that's unrelated to this, but it goes back to an earlier point that Chairman Davis or someone made, and that is parents, effective parenting and the outcomes of children. And when I think about this, the question for me is not why some kids make it in these troubled neighborhoods, but why so many kids do not make it even when they have effective parents.

It is much easier to be a parent in the suburbs than in the inner city, where you have conditions that undermine, not reinforce, parenting. I'd like to take some of those parents in the suburbs and put them in the inner city and see how effective they will be over the long term. And I think it's important to recognize that. There are very effective parents in the inner city, and some of them are

doing a marvelous job, but the challenges they face are overwhelming and some of them don't succeed even though they are dedicated and committed to their children. So I just wanted to underscore that point.

Ms. NORTON. Oh, good. I very much thank you for that point because this notion of parents competing with the streets, particularly if it's a boy child; difficult for parents to compete with the culture on television, all of the things that you're supposed to do in order to be one of the guys. But it has always seemed to me to be beyond comprehension, particularly, how a single mother living in a part of the city surrounded by thugs and drugs and guns somehow keeps hold of that child. The point you make there about even having two parents in that and dealing in that competition is one of the great challenges facing our country. Increasingly, middle-class parents see it in their own way as well. Appreciate that.

I think I should move on to Mr. Quander, because we've been talking about how attitudes and difficulties are—compound——

Mr. MANN. Congresswoman?

Ms. NORTON. Yes?

Mr. MANN. I'm sorry. I need to excuse myself.

Ms. NORTON. We understood that you would have to leave early, and we want to thank you for your testimony.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

We received a request from staff that you sign a couple footballs on the way out.

Mr. MANN. No problem. No problem.

Thank you very much for the time.

Ms. NORTON. We appreciate your testimony.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. We'll just be here, I think, a few more minutes.

Ms. NORTON. You'll have to forgive us for the quid pro quo that the chairman here exacts from witnesses.

Mr. Quander, we're moving on to the figure that I opened with, which is not half of our black men in prison, but half of those in prison are black men. This is a completely incomprehensible and unbearable figure, but it means that in every community we're going to get back from prison large numbers of black men, and the attitudes that people have that have been to prison, that have been under discussion, are well known.

I'd like some discussion with you about your own work, because you, of course, have to deal with those attitudes right up front. You are dealing in an economy that even—that Dr. Wilson is right. I mean, I saw during the late 1990's inmates from Lorton get work, and I was amazed at it. But look at this economy.

I want to ask you about your program, just what—just very important for people to know. Our inmates are in a Federal program. In many ways it is many steps ahead from inmates from the District of Columbia, because there is no State system that does anything with inmates. But the Federal system does provide services: anger management, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, job-finding services and halfway houses; the kinds of services that inmates in the United States seldom get. So it would seem logical to ask you, who has had to deal with the hardest of those attitudes, in a service-oriented environment? What has been your success when there

was a boom economy and what has been your success more recently during this downturn in the economy? So if you could address those, all of those questions, I'd appreciate it.

Mr. QUANDER. Certainly. Economics is the key. As you indicated earlier, a man needs to have money in his pocket, a man needs to provide for his family and for himself, and there are many options. He can do it legitimately, or he's going to go out in the streets and do it illegally and get back into the criminal justice system.

What we try to do is break down that attitude and try to develop in the returning offender some sense of empathy for his community and for himself. He has to care about what it is that he's doing and about his community. All too often when an individual is sentenced, when he is looking at that judge who's going to determine his fate, he often mentions his children, that he doesn't want to be separated from his children. When he comes back to us, we like to remind him of that. Children and your family are key to your existence and the key to our community.

One of the things that we have done, Congresswoman Norton, is to work with existing resources and programs that are already in place. The faith community in the District of Columbia is strong and is remarkable. Many faith institutions have ongoing programs, church ministries for prison; in other words, clothing, food, things of that nature.

What we have developed is a program where we have 150, I believe, faith institutions who have signed on that run the gamut from the Nation of Islam, the Church of Scientology to the Archdiocese of Washington, DC, who have all come in to join a mentoring program so that when that offender comes in, it's not only that they see the community supervision officer as a parole or probation officer that is talking to him about that attitude, but it's a mentor, someone that person may relate to.

The other thing that we try to do is to try to match up other programs; Mr. Starke's program is a prime example. Mr. Starke spoke at a forum that was held at GW University earlier this year, and he talked about his program, and for a good government bureaucrat, he said those magic words: free. So I approached him, and in June we enrolled a number of our offenders into his project. Not only did we enroll them, but we matched mentors with those offenders so that they could have that support network, because all too often when an offender is back home, it's not a safe environment. As soon as he walks out of that door, he's seeing drugs, he's seeing crime, he's seeing prostitution, he's seeing all those things that pull him back into the criminal justice system. And what we try to do with the mentorship program, and we're growing it and trying to get it larger, is to provide that offender with not only a professional in the role of a CSO, but someone who's out in the community who can give support and guidance.

Many of our offenders, as they were growing up, have never seen a mother or a father get up because of an alarm clock. They say it's time to get up, we've got to go to work. They just don't see it. So when you talk about developing skills and talk about soft skills, how do you deal with someone at the job place who is your supervisor who you are just not getting along with? Do you just turn away and walk away, or do you try to deal with it?

One of the problems we have with people who have been incarcerated and coming back in is that there is a high degree of frustration very quickly, and we have to work with them and with others so that we can sort of remedy that level of frustration to keep them in the process; so that we can develop those skills, get them through those critical periods and get them back up on their feet.

Ms. NORTON. Now, the second part of my question: There were some really extraordinary statistics that came forward from your program. This was before you came there, but it was during the good economy, where, during hearings before this committee, your program, precisely because of the services—and the mentor services are fine, but you were offering hard-core services, the ones I mentioned before, anger management, jobs. You had people in halfway houses so you could deal with them. And what the Federal Government does is a real model for what it does for when people get out of prison.

All right. That was in a very good economy. The recidivism rate was very low. It was a really wonderful set of statistics. It showed a government program really working, because the Federal Government was putting the money into services to make it possible for ex-felons to, in fact, proceed in regular society.

Now we come to a different economy. We've had a job fair just in July, and among those who came—and we had almost 10,000 people come—among those who came were a fair number of recently released people from the Federal prisons, and I didn't quite know what to say to them. I didn't believe for real that, given two people, one who had a record and one that did not, that my constituents who had just gotten out of prison would rationally seem to the employer the person that should be hired. That's what was in my mind. Now, what has been your experience, and what do you do about the fact that there's so many coming home now when the economy is turned down, notwithstanding your services?

Mr. QUANDER. It's a tough issue, and in many cases it's a dilemma for us. What we try to do is make each of our field sites—and we're located in the community. We have seven field sites throughout the District of Columbia, so in many cases we're accessible, even through Metro or for a walk for our offenders. What we're trying to do is provide those skills and those trainings that make them attractive to the employer right in those field offices, right in those field sites. So what we're trying to do, and we've succeeded in certain respects, is to have a One-Stop shopping right in our field sites, so when they come in, if their reading is deficient, we have learning labs that are right there in the site. In some field sites we already have vocational development specialists right there on board.

As far as the other services that we are providing men and women in the criminal justice system, they have to be responsive to our accountability needs, so we have their substance abuse testing that's done in that site, and we're also offering some groups to deal with the substance abuse, the anger management, the family counseling, the things of that nature that will help them to make that transition.

It's an uphill battle because of the right they have to compete with others who don't have that criminal justice background but at

the same time they can bring to the work force some experience of real life. They know that they've made mistakes. They know where those traps are. Sometimes they can offer an employer just what he needs. I've been down and out. I've been down that wrong road. I need an opportunity, and sometimes there are employers out there, and we are doing I think a much better job today in trying to educate employers to give our people an opportunity. Because if you give them an opportunity, we think we have the structure in place that we can sustain it. It is difficult, but those are some of the challenges and those are some of the things that we're trying to do to assist.

The other area I need to speak on is the Department of Employment Services in the District of Columbia. We are actually trying to get them in our location. We've signed a memorandum of understanding with them, but there have been funding issues for them. So they are really not on board. We want them in place so that our people can go right to their office. They can pick up the phone and we can start making some of these things work.

Ms. NORTON. It's really extraordinary to see how you have created One-Stop Centers out of what might not have been that in the first place just by being responsive to your constituent community.

I was very impressed with what you said about training. If you go out here and look for a job and you can't find one and your field office at least is providing some training, you are doing the exact equivalent of what a lot of young people are doing today. They can't find a job when they get out of college or out of high school, so they say I guess I'm going to go out and get some more education. So they then go to the local community college or to the State college, and they wouldn't have done that if in fact the economy was good.

Let me move on to Dr. Cummings, because I'm very, very interested in what you've done and the model that you describe, because the success rate was so extraordinary and in this notion, also alluded to by Dr. Wilson, about how the schools work notion, not one size doesn't fit all. We tell everybody, of course, you should try to go to college, but the fact is that increasing numbers of people are finding good jobs without going to college, some of them in the technical areas.

But somehow bridging the gap between people who find school not relevant to their lives and coming out and being able to find a job very much interested me in your testimony, and so I'd really like to know how you produce those statistics. What was it that led to those good outcomes and led to young people staying in school?

Mr. CUMMINGS. Well, Congresswoman Norton, I think there were a number of factors. The first thing, in the Houston area, I speak about these compacts, when I'm talking to people, these partnerships that are addressing what I think Dr. Wilson was talking about, both the supply side and the demand side.

On the supply side, the communities and school piece that I spoke about, which is one of many, had the opportunity to have the full endorsement of the greater Houston partnership, which is the demand side to a certain extent and so going in they had all the resources on the table to make the program successful.

But a bigger problem with the partnership between the demand and the supply side it appears to me to be the attitudes of the peo-

ple in charge, and somebody has to deal with that. Because in this work force environment, where the workplace is comprised of people that have entitlements because of the status quo, somebody has to be able to articulate a need or maybe even a demand for them to consider people who are not like them, people who should benefit from both the training side as well as the opportunity to utilize the training in an economic way that enables them to do the things that we've been talking about associated with living well and participating in the society.

The notion that I tried to get at with respect to looking at some of these places was how did these schools—because I'm basically interested in effective schools that serve African-American youngsters. That is my research agenda. That is what I do for the National Alliance Black School Educators. And, in looking at the ingredients, what I find is that there is an expectation in these schools which feature work force training that academic and skill-based training have equal importance and that the programs are not programs where you throw somebody away because they are going to get into a program that leads to a job.

Ms. NORTON. The old-fashioned vocational school.

Mr. CUMMINGS. That is still there. As a matter of fact, some preliminary finding from the study—I think I can share those with you. I was on the independent advisory panel for that, suggests that people who concentrate in a high school training program actually over the course of their life earn more. They also take more academic courses because they are in high-quality programs, and it demands that you have the kind of background that is necessary to be successful. You've got to have the mathematics, you've got to have the science, and so on.

Also, it suggests that not only do they have those two ingredients, but they see themselves as pursuing postsecondary options, which in my mind adds to the ability to meet, in the situation like the one I described in Houston, the demands of the individuals who have the jobs available and are asking for them to have certain skills and certain knowledge. It gives them the opportunity to change their ways of recruiting and promoting individuals in their places of work.

It's a very different and a very difficult environment in order to get the results when you have individuals who are frowned upon just because of the nature of their gender and their race and you've got individuals who are in charge who have not been sensitized to the need to do something about that, that's different than what got them in place.

Ms. NORTON. Well, your testimony is very deep, Dr. Cummings. It suggests that many high schools need to be reorganized altogether, regardless of who is in charge, that the equivalence between one kind of training and another kind of education needs to be there, and I'm afraid that's not there in most schools. Most schools are known for one kind of education, and if you happen to be in that neighborhood and go there and that education doesn't suit you, you're out of luck. But if that school is reorganized so that children who needed different strokes could get them from different folks, it seems to me that your research would be most informative. I appreciate it.

Ms. Gwathney, I must tell you that I'm very interested in One-Stop, and let me tell you the Department of Labor initially funded the work of the Commission on Black Men and Boys, an initial $100,000 grant; it was very important. We worked with the Joint Center for Political Studies to get started in all of this work. What interested the Department of Labor was, of course, what they also fund, which are these One-Stop Centers, but I'm interested in a different kind of One-Stop Center. It may take somewhat from what—from Mr. Quander's testimony.

The testimony here today has told us, if nothing else, that there is no magic bullet, and thus the One-Stop Center has a special attraction if you're trying to deal with these issues.

The Joint Center report—they issued a report in the initial phase here—found that it was easier to draw girls and women to government programs than to draw men and boys, and if you think about it, that won't seem so strange. You know, the street culture which is so attractive to men is not found exactly on the inside of programs, and one of the things that we think programs need to do is to learn how to get out into the street to where their constituency is.

That aside, before you get there, your One-Stop testimony is very intriguing to us. For example, the kinds of "programs we don't think black men will come forward to," among them are programs or habits that are killing the rest of the community like HIV/AIDS, that you can have yourself a little HIV/AIDS center, and at some point you may in fact get black men to come in, particularly if they get desperate enough, but you probably won't get them to come in early enough for testing and in other ways.

Our own experience in the District of Columbia is that if you have a center which has something that black men want, they will come to that center; for example, unemployment benefits, jobs or job search. I'd like your advice on whether you believe a One-Stop Center which had unemployment benefits, job search, job advice but also happened to have in it personnel who would deal with parenting, personnel who would deal with health issues, mental and psychological health issues, HIV/AIDS, would deal with the kinds of issues that face black men and which they only face when they become terribly serious. Do you think a multipurpose One-Stop Center of that kind would be useful, given the testimony you've heard today?

Ms. GWATHNEY. Well, in my experience I would say yes, just based on our research, which suggests that when you put everything in one place, if someone can get everything that they need in one place, then there may be services that they hadn't thought of or intended to use that make themselves available to them at that place. There are places across the country where One-Stops have actually incorporated those type of services, Detroit being one. There are several in Washington—in the Washington area, there are some in California and there are some in Texas that incorporate the wholistic approach to not just getting a job but the other to-work issues. If you have health issues, you can't work. If you have transportation issues, you can't work, those type of things.

So I would say, yes, to make the center as attractive as possible to all customers and to try to provide the types of services similar

to the big supermarkets that put everything that you could possibly think of into supermarkets so you can go to that one place and get everything done that you need to get done in one visit, as opposed to several stops along the way.

Ms. NORTON. Well, your testimony is very important to us as we think this matter through, because the Commission—the D.C. Commission on Black Men and Boys has shown a deep interest in putting the services that black men may not come to get in with the services they come to get, and one of the items on the action agenda is to go to the Department of Labor and try to seek funding from them and perhaps other Federal agencies in this way.

Chairman Davis, who is such a good friend of mine, as he says, even when he's wrong on vouchers, that I'm right on public schools, this is a truly good friend of the District of Columbia. The chairman is working with me now as a Republican on getting voting rights—full voting rights, at least in the House—to District residents. So when I approached the chairman and asked for this hearing, asked him to put it on the agenda, it is typical of his extraordinary generosity that he unhesitatingly said yes.

I'm not going to—there are a zillion other questions. He has been generous with his time. I'm not going to ask more questions.

We are going to prepare an action agenda, and the staff of the Government Reform Committee that's been so helpful to us may wish to propound questions to each of you, and I would ask that you perhaps be available to answer some of those questions.

I want to leave only with this notion. When the Commission had its hearing, Mr. Starke may remember as the Chair that he raised the issue at that very first hearing of alternatives to sentencing when African-American men were before a judge, and he raised it because before us was Judge Reggie Walton, who had been the head of the D.C. Superior Court Family Division, had just been appointed by President Bush as a U.S. District Judge, and at that time we learned that the judges did not have before them information about programs such as Mr. Starke's program.

When dealing with Mr. Quander's dilemma, there is no real alternative to keeping people out of incarceration altogether. Mandatory minimums which confine black men for non-violent drug crimes are completely killing the African-American community. As much as we need to deal with the symptoms, we've got to go back to that original hearing that Mr. Starke left us with, and of course with the whole round of ways to prevent incarceration but even at the point when you can catch a young man before he goes into prison, up to that very point we have to work to keep that from happening. If you come out of jail and you are a black man and in addition the word felon is on your forehead, I do not know what this society is ultimately going to be able to do.

So your testimony has been most important in that way, and I want you to know that, at the bottom, I'm the mother of a son who does not pat herself on the back that she raised a good son—and he is such a good son. I know good and well that it had everything to do with having a mother and a father in the house. It had to do with my wonderful mother-in-law, Mrs. Norton, who was always there for us, that extended family. I know good and well that it didn't even have to do only with the fact that this is a very good

boy. It had to do with what luck was available to him, was available to me and my three sisters and is increasingly unavailable to an entire generation of African-American families and, especially, men.

And I'm going to—one of the questions that we're going to ask you in writing is going to be perhaps the most difficult of all. I will just say it for the record. In whole sections of our community, and increasingly in the society at large, marriage is going out of style. If you believe that marriage is good for children, that is to say, based on the millennia of evidence, my question is this: If we let in the African-American community so much water roll over the hill, with people having children without even thinking about marriage, particularly young men, young women tend to think about it and want it, even if we get to the point where opportunity is available, even given the fact that for many young African-American middle class men opportunity is available, if in fact a cultural norm develops of having children without fathers, will we build that into the life of the African-American community?

What I'm asking you is, if this becomes an acceptable way to have and raise children, at some point will it matter that some members of the community in fact have opportunity? Will marriage not just be the cultural norm in our community? And if that happens, have we not broken faith with more than 200 years in this country? Is there a way, even short of finding jobs, to make sure that the cultural norm of at least desiring marriage with children can remain intact in our community?

Mr. Chairman, you see that I did you the favor of not asking for responses to that, but I had to get it off my mind.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Well, thank you very much.

Let me thank all our panelists. You have all enriched the record and we'll come back and assess it. Maybe there will be a legislative outcome as well.

We appreciate, Ms. Norton, your leadership in putting this Commission together and having them come up and give us a status report on this. I appreciate the other Commission members who didn't testify today for your service on it. I think we're making a difference.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, could I ask that a letter from Benjamin S. Carson, the famous black surgeon at Johns Hopkins University, who wrote us concerning this hearing, be admitted into the record?

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Without objection.

[The information referred to follows:]

09/12/03 Entered into the Record by Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton Full Committee - 2154

JOHNS HOPKINS
MEDICINE

Neurological Surgery

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Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., M.D.
Professor and Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery

August 29, 2003

The House Government Reform Committee
c/o Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes-Norton

Dear Friends:

I am so glad that you have concluded that it is important to come together to discuss the many problems facing Black boys and Black men in America. As you know, this group of individuals in our society is facing unprecedented problems such as astronomical homicide rates in our large cities and having more young Black men in the penal system then there are in college. This does not bode well for the future, and clearly we must act now to avoid an escalation of the problem.

Although I grew up in the inner city in a single parent family with a mother who had only a third grade education, my brother and I were blessed because she was determined that we succeed. With teachers and other caring adults who extended a helping hand, they were able to help us understand that the person who had the most to do with what happened to us was staring at us in the mirror. Once I understood that, the combination of hard work and faith in God made all things possible.

It is my sincere hope that the District of Columbia Commission on Black Men and Boys, which was established by Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes-Norton, will with your help be able to provide hope and direction for this valued group of our society. Remember that even though all of our ancestors came to this country in different boats, we are all in the same boat now and if part of the boat sinks, eventually the rest of it will go down too.

Sincerely yours,

Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., M.D.
Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery
Professor of Neurological Surgery
Oncology, Plastic Surgery, and Pediatrics

Ms. NORTON. And that the written testimony of all the witnesses be accepted into the record.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you. I will do that.

Ms. NORTON. Could I ask unanimous consent to keep the record open?

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Without objection, so ordered.

Again, let me thank all of you for taking your time, for your service and for testifying here today; and the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:17 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

[Additional information submitted for the hearing record follows:]

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
3100 CLEBURNE AVENUE HOUSTON, TEXAS 77004

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OFFICE OF THE DEAN
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Prepared by:
Jay Cummings, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor

1. You have identified a model program in Houston. Can you think of other programs that also are worthy as models?

   The Phoenix Outreach Youth Center, a non-profit 502 (c)(3) community organization, sponsored by the Black United Fund of Texas, is committed to providing programs and resources to the children in Houston's Fifth Ward community. Services for youth include academic enhancement, drug prevention, cultural awareness, computer technology, creative writing, anger resolutions, bible study, sign language, health and nutrition. For families there are additional services that include behavior modification, as well as individual, group, and family therapy. Enclosed for your information is a publication that describes the various components of the center.

2. You singled out Communities in Schools Houston, Incorporated, as an effective program that could be a model for the District of Columbia. Could you describe this program? Why do you think this program has produced such good outcomes? How does this program distinguish itself from less successful programs?

   Communities in Schools Houston (CISH), Incorporated provided services to 39,725 secondary school students through a variety of services listed below:
   - Supportive Guidance
   - Parental Involvement
   - Academic Enhancement
   - Case Management
   - Health and Human Service Linkages
   - Cultural Enrichment
   - Employment Related Activities

   CISH works with principals, teachers, parents, and the business community in a school district to provide social support, tutoring, mentoring, health education, field trips, career/college awareness activities, and special programs to support families and students. Students are referred for the following: 1) Problems with school work; 2) Behavior problems; and 3) Poor school attendance.

3. You have said that compacts and collaborations you've seen in various cities have been easy to set up but difficult to sustain over time. Is there a way for government to help sustain these collaborations? Can government create economic or other incentives to help sustain these partnerships?

   Front end commitments to education and social services programming have been center stage with the connections established through the standards-based school reform movement. These connections sustained education and business during not-so-distant times of economic prosperity and proved useful to both entities in the prevailing policy environment. However, once the environment shifted because of the economic slow down, businesses or demand side interests prevented the continuous support levels for education or supply side expectations. For example, the linch pin to workforce education in the most promising programs has been opportunities for internships and other work-based programs that featured the applied skills as well as academic knowledge. This was often referred to as the marriage of the "brain and brawn." Policies that undergird this potential marriage with resources that promote quality and equity would be very useful instruments for change.

4. Do you have any other comments on what you think is integral to an "action plan" for the public and private sector to help improve opportunities for young black me in the District of Columbia?

   Evidence of a strong commitment to effective and sustained collaboration between executive leaders and senior level government officials could pave the way to organize and operationalize a P-16 pipeline such that the four factors would emerge as part of the mission to accommodate the needs as well as aspirations of African-American males.

Supplemental Testimony of Robin Gwathney
Project Manager
John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development
Full Committee Hearing on "Black Men and Boys in the District of Columbia and their Impact on the Future of the Black Family"
September 12, 2003

Response

How do successful programs recruit customers to one-stop centers? How are customers drawn into the center? How do staff assist customers once they walk through the door? What kind of follow-up services does it provide? Do any programs send counselors into schools, recreation centers, or onto the street to draw customers to the program? Do you think one-stop services could target customers in this fashion?

Our research confirms that the care devoted to planning by those involved in thinking through the details of the service delivery system is a very important ingredient in the development of a One-Stop that appears to works very well. A successful center employs the following principles of operation:

- Excellent service
- Focus on customer satisfaction
- Collaboration and coordination
- Integration
- Universal access
- Comprehensive services
- No duplication of service
- Quality environment

Customer solicitation or recruitment takes various forms – targeted mailings, linkages with other community organizations, canvassing of neighborhoods, or outreach to business, schools and religious organizations. However, successful centers have surveyed their customer base to determine what their needs are and the obstacles that prevent or hinder access, and provide programming around those needs. That's a big change and improvement on the usual service delivery model – it focuses on what the client wants, not just what the system wants to deliver. Disseminating the message to the customer base will be determined by where the customers are – albeit at schools, neighborhoods, centers, or onto the streets.

Additionally, our research supports that the first point of contact for a customer is crucial. In almost all the Centers documented in the *Promising Practices* report, customers greeted by staff that could answer their questions and get them to the services they sought, maintained high customer satisfaction ratings. These cross trained staff have performed reception functions, assistance in the resource room, and conducted job search workshops. While staff capacity building and professional development has proven to be a major challenge for workforce development organizations in the private and public sectors, it is a necessity.

Do you have any other comments on what you think is integral to an "action plan" for the public and private sectors to help improve opportunities for young black men in the District of Columbia?

An initiative of this type requires cooperation among many different agencies with different cultures and styles of operating. It is essential to get public and private sector leaders involved early and often to promote action. Insure that the key public and private leaders are comfortable with the strategy to be used in constructing and implementing the initiative. Strong systems take time to build.

It is important to develop programs based on a factual assessment of community needs and structure services that respond to those needs. The partners must then be prepared to shape their services to be responsive to community input. Recognizing that there is no single action plan that can be successfully used for all clients, will foster innovative problem-solving.

Lastly, leadership is the key element. Someone must take the lead, and be willing to step outside their traditional role. Accepting this leadership will require a willingness to make sometimes drastic strategic changes while simultaneously maintaining the shared vision of those involved.

Responses to Questions for the Record from
Dr. William Julius Wilson
Harvard University

1. What can be done to change negative employer attitudes concerning inner-city black males?

It is true that more needs to be done to connect the business community with young black males. This includes facilitating a greater understanding among employers of the obstacles black men face in finding and keeping gainful employment as well as a greater appreciation on the part of black men with limited labor market experience of their roles and responsibilities as employees. However, bringing about a more favorable response to inner-city black male workers on the part of employers will require that the nation experience sustained job growth and a tight labor marketed as witnessed in the U.S in the late 1990s. As the work of Richard Freeman and William Rodgers (see Freeman and Rodgers, 1999. Area Economic Conditions and the Labor Market Outcomes of Young Men in the 1990s Expansion, National of Economic Research, Working Paper 7073, Cambridge MA) demonstrates, in the economic boom period of the latter 1990s black males with a high school education or less, many with prison records, were working more, earning higher wages, and committing fewer crimes in comparison to a similar cohort earlier in that decade. By helping employers realize the prosocial benefits of improved labor market opportunities for disadvantaged males, policy makers may be able to dispel the negative perceptions surrounding these prospective employees.

Involving employers more directly in job training programs would help to increase awareness about some of the particular obstacles these men encounter in trying to find a job and would provide the business sector with an opportunity to influence the kind of training enrollees in these programs receive. It is especially important that men who have limited work histories, minimal education, criminal records or little formal education, are able to obtain the kind of targeted training that will allow them to obtain a marketable skill. Job-training programs that are directly connected with employers and that provide job skills that appeal to the business community would greatly help to increase clients' chances of job placement and help to dispel stereotypes about black men's work commitments.

2. What can be done to improve the employment and earnings prospects of low-skilled black men who are several years removed from high school?

Low-skilled black men who are older than high-school age are at a particular disadvantage since they may have lengthy periods of unemployment that limit their marketability. In addition to community-based job readiness programs that provide soft- and hard-skills training, service providers need to consider alternative approaches to helping young men formally connect with the labor force. One innovative strategy that is receiving some attention lately is know as "alternative staffing services" that seek to job-broker on behalf of some of the most disadvantaged job seekers (see "Alternative Job Brokering: Addressing Labor Market Disadvantages, Improving the Temp Experience,

and Enhancing Job Opportunities," 20003. A Report of the National Study of Alternative Staffing Services published by the Center for Social Policy, John W. McCormick Graduate School of Policy Studies, University of Massachusetts Boston). These providers engage in temporary-to-permanent job brokering, whereby they serve a "marketing agents" for groups of individuals whose circumstances lessen their chances of finding employment on their own. These providers also offer intensive post-employment support to mitigate post-employment difficulties that the employer or employee may encounter. Essentially, these services help low-skilled workers find temporary day labor thereby facilitating their access to employment. Providers continue to work with clients while they are on the job to ensure that they acquire the kinds of soft and hard skills to remain on the job and ultimately seek to transition these positions into permanent hires. Service providers face limited funding opportunities for these essential post-employment services and a concerted policy effort needs to be made to help support these programs in a meaningful way.

3. If the mandatory level of child support payments is reduced, will there be an adverse effect on mothers and their children, including black boys? How would this problem be mitigated so that children of low-skilled black men would not suffer?

There are other ways to offset the burden of high child support payments rather than reducing the mandatory level of child support payments. For instance, by allowing noncustodial fathers who pay child support to take full advantage of the EITC or by offering some form of debt reduction assistance or amnesty to fathers who are in arrears would help fathers to meet their current child support obligations (Sorensen and Zibman, 2001."Poor Dads who don't pay child support: Deadbeats or disadvantaged?" New Federalism: National Survey of America's Families, Series B No. B-30. Washington DC: The Urban Institute; E. Murphy. 2003. Men, Poverty and Social Welfare. Dissertation presented to Heller School of Social Policy and Management. Brandeis University, MA).

Alternatively, a reduction in the amount of child support payments may be augmented by increasing the amount of time the noncustodial parent spends with his child. Not being allowed to visit their children is one of the main reasons delinquent parents give for not paying support. Intervention programs that provide parent counseling or conflict resolution for one or both parents may help to increase father involvement (see Elizabeth Peters, 2000. "Can Child Support Policies Promote Better Father Involvement? The Role of Coercive vs. Supportive Policies," Poverty Research News, Joint Center for Poverty Research, Northwestern University/University of Chicago, IL. Vol 4. No. 2)

4.What can be done to reduce discrimination against ex-offenders? Would tax incentives make a difference?

Service providers can become more familiar with the laws that govern the employment of people with a criminal record. Employers are legally allowed not to hire ex-offenders for specific jobs. Providers need to be more cognizant of these restrictions and attempt to train ex-offenders for positions that they can legitimately apply for.

Providers can also seek to lessen the concerns of employers by helping to train and prepare ex-offenders for suitable positions and by providing followup supports for a specific post-employemt period. Service providers can also help to allay employers' concerns about future liability should the ex-offender commit a crime at a later date. By helping to reduce or eliminate the threat of liability, providers can increase the attractiveness of ex-offender hires.

5) Other comments?

No